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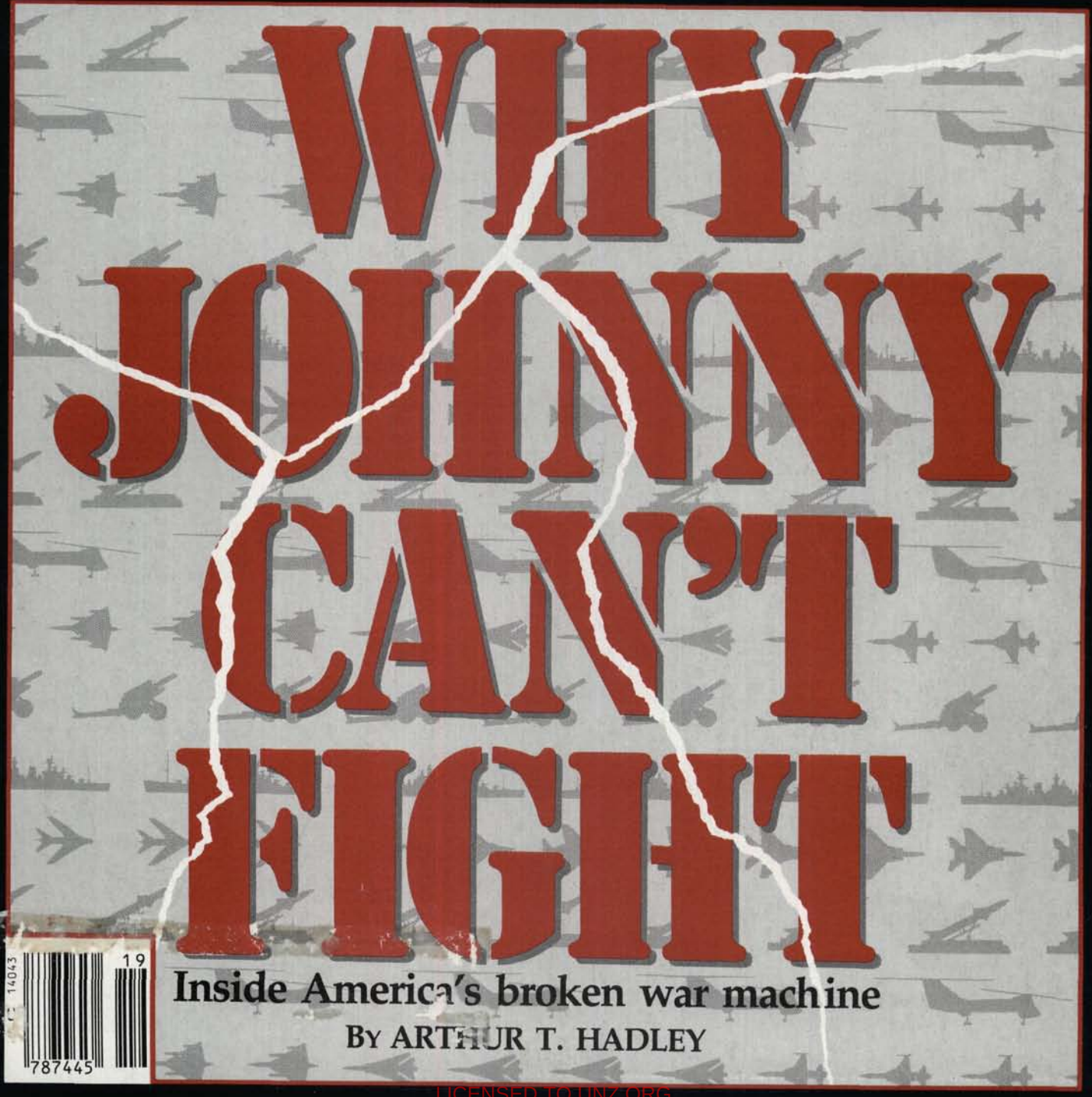

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Inside America's broken war machine

BY ARTHUR T. HADLEY

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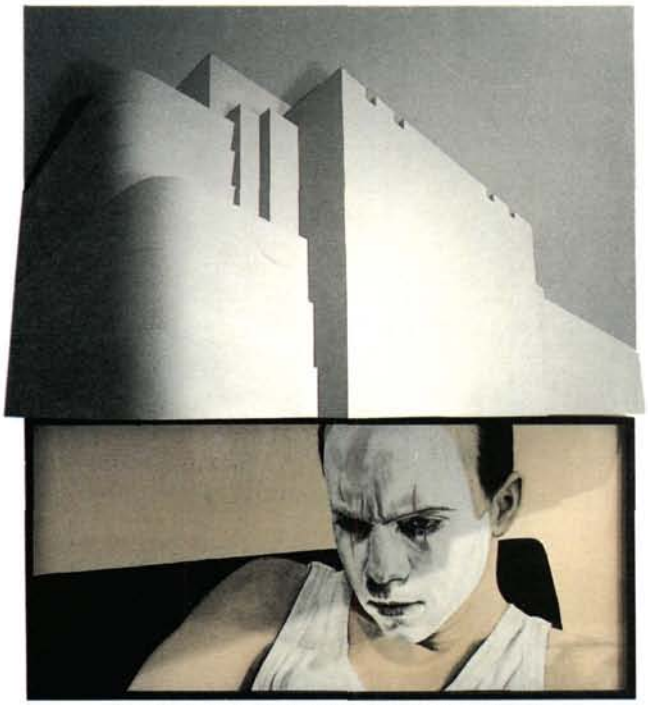

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Robert Coles on NICARAGUA

Arturo Cruz, who resigned as Nicaragua's Ambassador to the U.S., wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that the Sandinista Revolution's "rank and file" is made up of "idealistic boys and girls."

Recently I went with two of my sons to Nicaragua. Idealism seemed very much in evidence. The literacy program has been dramatically effective; among those who helped in that effort were upper and middle class youth in Managua who attended a Roman Catholic school. The school's principal, Edwin Maradiaga, a native-born priest, was eloquent in his description of what has taken place: "For our students this was the opportunity of their lives. They had lived in a protected world of their own. Under Somoza, half the country had an income of less than $100 a year. The Somoza family alone owned a quarter of all our arable land. They and a handful of cronies had total power and huge wealth, while 80 percent of the people had no water, and two thirds of them no electricity, and half no sanitary facilities at all, and nearly three quarters lived in houses with dirt floors. Over 100 of every 1,000 children born died as infants.

"Our students have learned these statistics. Once they didn't know them, because — to be frank — we didn't teach them. We didn't know them ourselves! Many of our students have never forgotten the experience of going into the barrios, and teaching children their own age how to read and write. One of our boys asked why he'd never been told about how his own people live. I think many of us have been shaking our heads about the past and trying to work for a better future. I wish someone would tell your people how many of our young people from very comfortable families have been given a real jolt of idealism by this Revolution."

But he is a reflective priest, by no means willing to allow the above observations to take complete control of his mind. He is in a terrible bind. He knows there are tough ideologues hard at work among the Sandinistas — anxious to give short shrift to the desire many have for a social democratic outcome. The Sandinistas have curbed dissent, and shown little sensitivity to the people's religious yearnings or the truly revolutionary possibilities a Christian spirit offers.

But: "For over four decades we lived with fear and bitterness every day here, and we knew that the outside world, by and large, didn't care much that we were a country enslaved," he pointed out to us, to my sons especially, who kept wondering how it was that a country they love — our country — could be so indifferent for so long to the ordeal of Nicaragua under Somoza — and now be so vigorously sensitive to the mistakes and wrongdoings of the Sandinistas.

Extracted from the April 1984 NEW OXFORD REVIEW

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HART TROUBLE

To the editors:
Robert Kaus's "Gary Hart's Idea Collection" (TNR, March 26) reports that Mr. Hart favors government action to ensure "economic equality" in the sense of "comparable pay for comparable worth." This is news to me, and certainly dampens my hopes that Mr. Hart might offer a real liberal alternative to the misguided and counterproductive reliance on government of which the "old" liberals have often been guilty. Would Mr. Hart apply this principle—essentially "to each according to his or her work"—only to government employment? Or only to instances in which inequities obtained between male and female employees? And how would he measure the intangible rewards of different jobs?

I would happily contribute to a list of occupations for which I think the remuneration dictated by the market is outrageously disproportionate to the relative "skill, knowledge, education, experience, and responsibility" that those jobs require, not to mention their relative social worth. But I doubt that any two TNR readers would produce identical lists. In the absence of a divinely inspired Absolute Wage and Salary Scale, I can see no alternative to allowing the market, combined with collective bargaining and selective regulation (e.g., antitrust law), to determine the financial rewards of various occupations. To entrust the job to government would merely create a gargantuan new bureaucracy with new opportunities for arbitrariness to flourish. There is nothing "new" or really liberal about this idea of government-decreed "economic equality."

GORDON LIVERMORE
Worthington, Ohio

DEMOCRATIC MISTAKES

To the editors:
Robert Dahl's "The Democratic Mystique" (TNR, April 2) suggested the U.S. government acknowledge that Central America's authoritarian regimes cannot be converted into democracies by U.S. efforts because of the lack of certain preconditions: widespread literacy, sizable middle classes, economic development, etc. Mr. Dahl says we had better explore how to deal with the existing authoritarian regimes.

I disagree. It is not a question of the United States endeavoring to convert these regimes into democracies, but rather of it assisting the democratic forces, which actually exist, to come to the fore and take over the destinies of their respective countries. Although Mr. Dahl deprecates the Latin Americans' democratic capabilities, the overriding cause of the political backwardness in each nation is the military-oligarchy axis (at times backed by the United States) with its economic elitism, political suppression, and state terrorism—not the shortage of popular leaders who yearn and work for democracy.

Despite a low quota of Mr. Dahl's preconditions, democratic regimes in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador launched far-reaching agrarian and social reforms in the 1950s and 1960s. Right-wing military coups, and, in the case of Guatemala, a C.I.A.-sponsored invasion, ended these nascent democratic efforts.

To bring back democracy to El Salvador at the present, the United States would merely have to remove its support of the right-wing military regime and throw its weight behind a left-of-center coalition government consisting of José Napoleón Duarte's Christian Democrats, Guillermo Ungo's Social Democrats, and the nontotalitarian leftists from the guerrilla forces. No doubt President Reagan will continue to shun such an obvious solution. Would a new Democratic President make such a bold, farsighted move?

ARIE SCHOORL
Sacramento, California

'NEW ORDER' ODOR

To the editors:
Former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon said at one point that his war aim in Lebanon was to establish a "new order." I pointed out that he had the insensitivity to use "a Hitler phrase." TNR then accused me of "moral idiocy" ("Notebook," March 19) for "collaborating in one of the great calumnies"—that is, inventing a link between Israelis and Nazis.

Are you suggesting that General Sharon had never heard that phrase before, and could not have been expected to understand its historical associations? Are you under the impression that there was no reaction in Israel to his choice of words? Don't you think that the words, and their connotation, are at all relevant to the politics of the invasion and its unhappy aftermath?

STEPHEN ROSENFELD
The Washington Post
Washington, D.C.

The editors reply:
Ariel Sharon's ugly vocabulary is not news, though we cannot be certain of the Hitlerness of the phrase until we hear the Hebrew. But Mr. Rosenfeld is evading our criticism. If he believes that Ariel Sharon is like Adolf Hitler, he should say so. Presumably he does not. His casual remark is morally mischievous; it can have the consequence only of legitimating in the minds of his readers the link between Israelis and Nazis, which we continue to insist is one of the great calumnies of our age.

HIGH WAGES

To the editors:
D. H. E. Dicconson attributes the "decline" of industry, particularly the auto industry, to labor costs: "40 to 50 percent higher than Japan's" ("Correspondence," TNR, April 2). A recent study by the Organization for Cooperation and Development showed the annual gross earnings for a typical Japanese worker to be $16,960. For the United States the figure was $14,949. The same study reported that top executives in the major Japanese companies were paid an average of $85,000 per year but that U.S. executives were paid an average well in the six-figure range. At General Motors, salaries reach as high as $490,000. In addition, auto executives in the U.S. usually receive a bonus at year's end. So who is overpaid? To see high labor costs as the basic cause for the so-called declining industries is absurd when we are in a depression. Such high costs is the catch phrase with which management excuses its own failures.

W. W. RONAN
Atlanta, Georgia

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FROM WASHINGTON

Back To Nature

International law. It's sort of a goofy notion, isn't it? I mean, how can you have law without cops? The enemies of freedom do whatever their interests dictate and their power permits. Third World buffoons have turned the United Nations into a joke. So if the United States thinks it serves the cause of freedom to run a little war against the nasty Sandinistas in Nicaragua, why shouldn't we? In this hard world, aren't the Marquis of Queensberry rules just for saps?

Actually, no. There are good, hard-nosed reasons for even superpower America to take international law seriously.

International law is a living example of that poli-sci conceit, social contract theory. The nations of the world start in a state of nature, mutually suspicious and alone. Their only hope for avoiding perpetual chaos and war is to agree on some rules. There is no central authority to enforce those rules, and—despite the hopes of some woolly-minded idealists—there never will be. What's amazing, though, is how many rules there are and how often they're obeyed even so. Why? Because each state, in deciding whether to obey a particular rule, must consider its vested interest in the rule of law generally. The thicker the web of rules, the stronger each rule becomes.

International law has been most successful in relatively technical areas such as rights at sea. It has enjoyed modest success in regulating the conduct of war. Its record is poorest in actually preventing recourse to war. Nevertheless, even the Soviet Union pays at least lip service to Article 2 of the 1945 United Nations Charter, which forbids "the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state," and the United States—until now—has come rather close (for a superpower) to actually obeying it.

In a self-defeating attempt to deny the Nicaraguans a "propaganda victory," the Reagan Administration has told the World Court we won't recognize its authority for the next two years in any cases involving the United States and Central America. Submitting to the World Court is strictly voluntary, but at its founding in 1946 we ostentatiously submitted to "compulsory jurisdiction" on most matters. We promised to give six months' notice before withdrawing. That solemn gesture is a joke if we can slice off new exceptions every time we smell a case coming along that we don't like.

What's appalling about the Administration's preemptive maneuver is not that the World Court won't get to decide this case—it has never yet settled a real war issue—but the implicit acknowledgement that this country is acting illegally. Obviously there would be no "propaganda victory" for Nicaragua if we were to win the case, and the case could include our own countercharges against the Sandinistas. The World Court has *not* turned into a kangaroo court like other organs of the U.N. It is a serious judicial body. We ourselves bring cases to it. We're ducking this one because we know it's a loser.

The Administration says that our war against Nicaragua is a legal exercise of "collective self-defense" against "an armed attack" under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter. There are three defects in this argument. First, our campaign against Nicaragua comes closer to being "an armed attack" than Nicaragua's troublemaking for its neighbors. Second, where's the "collective"? We're acting without the participation, or even the clear support, of the threatened countries. Third, the U.N. Charter requires that exercises of self-defense "shall be immediately reported to the Security Council." The American government won't even officially acknowledge this enterprise to its own citizens.

Defenders of the Administration can't understand why Senators and others who went along with funding for the *contra* guerrillas should burst into moral outrage over the mining of Nicaragua's

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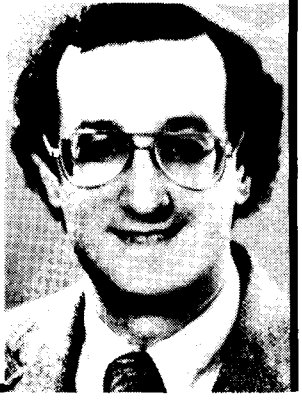

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 7, 1984

REMEMBER THE MINE

After the humiliation in Lebanon, the United States might at least have allowed a decent interval to pass before again making itself foolish in the eyes of the world. Yet we were back at it again with the Nicaraguan mining fiasco, a misadventure from its clumsy conception through its abrupt demise. And again, the display of incompetence was bipartisan, initiated by the Republican Administration and compounded by members of both parties in Congress. The C.I.A. apparently could not resist going beyond its role of providing assistance to anti-Sandinista rebel groups fighting in Nicaragua. It had to get its very own piece of the action, so it concocted schemes to involve itself directly in raiding a Nicaraguan port and then in laying mines in Nicaraguan harbors. The operations risked discovery, risked accusations that the United States was violating international law, risked arousing the indignation of countries whose shipping might be damaged. Yet the C.I.A. persuaded the President's national security adviser to walk its ideas into the Oval Office for approval, and he walked right out again with Mr. Reagan's O.K.

Congress's two intelligence oversight committees should have warned the Administration to drop its plans, but they didn't. Both were informed—in the case of the mining, the House's committee was told in January, the Senate's in March—but if the members were listening to what they were being told, they did not focus on the implications of a direct C.I.A. operation. Senators Barry Goldwater and Daniel Patrick Moynihan protest that out of more than 130 pages of hearing transcript only two sentences referred to the mining, and did not mention the C.I.A.'s role. The Administration counters that its written submissions—as opposed to oral summaries—described and justified the operation in detail. If the C.I.A. was hiding, the Senate was not seeking. After Murphy's Law was fulfilled with its customary reliability in matters covert and American, Congress panicked—much as it did when the going got rough in Lebanon—and not only condemned the mining operation by lopsided margins in both Houses but also threatened to cut off funding for aid to the *contras* entirely. That move, if actually carried through when Congress returns from recess, would be at least as mindless as the mining itself.

We do not support aid to the *contras* with any relish. And in many respects we do not support the Reagan Administration's goals and methods in supplying aid. For example, the bulk of U.S. assistance goes to the rightist, Honduras-based Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.), many of the field commanders of which were officers in Anastasio Somoza's brutal and justifiably detested National Guard. A far better prospect for winning the support of Nicaragua's people is the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE) headed by the former anti-Somoza guerrilla leader Edén Pastora ("Comandante Cero"). Mr. Pastora's force has just captured a coastal town in southern Nicaragua, has been bolstered (according to news reports) by the defection of an entire battalion of Sandinista soldiers, and is planning to set up a government in exile. ARDE apparently does now receive C.I.A. help, but much less than the F.D.N.

The Administration's purposes in aiding the guerrilla groups are also suspect. ARDE has proposed a plan whereby antigovernment military activity would cease if the Sandinistas agree to hold fair elections this November—that is, if opposition candidates are guaranteed security from Sandinista toughs and the right to have their views heard free from censorship, and if the election is internationally supervised. The Reagan Administration has failed to endorse the ARDE proposal, leading to the suspicion that democracy in Nicaragua is not one of its primary goals. Indeed, there seems to be a split within the Administration over Nicaragua much as there was in Lebanon. One group, said to include Secretary of State Shultz, believes (sensibly, in our view) that aid to the *contras* should be designed to pressure Nicaragua into halting subversive activity against El Salvador and into entering serious peace negotiations with its neighbors. Another school of thought within the Administration—reportedly led by Secretary of Defense Weinberger and the C.I.A. director, William Casey—regards the very existence of a leftist Nicaragua as an intolerable menace to vital interests of the

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United States, and wants it expunged. In other words, there is agreement on means but not on ends. The result is a confusion of policy, as the covert war goes forward without any clear idea of what it is meant to accomplish. The immediate danger is that the Administration will fail to press convincingly for negotiations and peace, will arouse fears at home and abroad that the United States intends to send American troops into the region, and will encourage Congress to force an end to American activities in Central America. That could lead to an unpalatable choice between a regional Communist victory and the introduction of American troops.

AIDING THE *contras* is not, by itself, a policy. But helping rebels, especially democratic rebels, with a view toward negotiations leading to some sort of regional settlement, is a policy, and a far better one than either letting the Sandinistas spread revolution or sending in U.S. troops. Could the Sandinista regime be won over with kindness, as all three Democratic Presidential candidates seem to propose? Something like that was tried by the Carter Administration after the new regime took power, and it didn't work. According to Alfonso Robelo Callejas, once a Somoza political prisoner, later a member of the Sandinistas' revolutionary junta, and now political director of ARDE, "It's possible that the United States pushed Castro into the arms of the Soviet Union, but that's not the case with the Sandinistas. The Carter Administration did everything possible to be friendly. It gave us $120 million in aid. It wanted to send a Peace Corps delegation until it was refused. On the other side, the Sandinistas had a secret defense agreement with Cuba from the beginning. That was the original foreign intervention. No government office when I was there was without a Cuban officer. The Cuban Ambassador sat at the table with the junta when it made its decisions."

Not much change in that department. According to both Administration and Congressional sources, there are now about eight thousand Cubans in Nicaragua, including three thousand military advisers installed in the Sandinista army of seventy-five thousand men, which is the largest army in Central America. From the outset the Sandinista regime has been dedicated to a "revolution without frontiers" in Central America, and has tried to destabilize not only El Salvador but also democratic Costa Rica. The Reagan Administration has failed to convince the American people and Congress with its evidence of Nicaragua's subversive activities, but a respected *New York Times* correspondent, Stephen Kinzer, reported on April 10 that European and Latin American diplomats based in Managua—including some whose governments have been critical of U.S. policy—now share the view that Nicaragua does indeed send military supplies to left-wing insurgents in El Salvador and provides training bases for them.

We believe that American policy toward Nicaragua must be one of both pressure and persuasion. To the extent that U.S.-aided forces tie down Nicaraguan forces and win popular support, the Sandinista regime will have to concern itself with its own security and cannot concentrate on making mischief across its borders. At the same time, the United States should make it clear that its goal is negotiation and political compromise both within Nicaragua and among the nations of Central America.

The trouble with the C.I.A.'s mining harbors, aiding ex-Somocistas, and ignoring opportunities for negotiation is that they undermine America's credibility as a respecter of international law, a promoter of democracy, and a partner in peacemaking. However, for Congress to cut off aid to the *contras* in reaction to the mining fiasco also would damage America's credibility. It would mean—once again—that the United States had embarked on a policy that it would not follow through on, in the process encouraging people to fight for the freedom of their country and then abandoning them. The collapse of American policy in Lebanon was a nasty blow to American credibility. Either a Marxist-Leninist takeover of Central America or an American invasion would be far worse.

NOTEBOOK

□ FRANK CHURCH (what a perfect name for this old-school orator!) left his mark on his times. In his twenty-four years as a Senator from Idaho, he often enlisted his eloquence in support of unpopular positions. As early as 1963 he understood that the United States would one day regret becoming mired in a civil war in Vietnam. In 1967 he criticized the heavy use of military assistance to prop up repressive regimes in developing countries, and pushed for increased economic aid. In the mid-'70s his investigations into multinational corporate wrongdoing and corruption produced a long record of surreptitious lobbying and arms peddling by some of the country's most powerful businesses. And his inquiry into the intelligence agencies' abuses, ranging from the plots against Martin Luther King Jr. to illegal wiretaps and mail-openings, led to Congressionally mandated reforms to safeguard civil liberties. We didn't agree with Frank Church about everything, but his defeat in 1980 deprived the Senate, as his death at 59 from cancer has now deprived the country, of the services of a passionate advocate of liberal and humane causes.

□ EDWARD ROTHSTEIN joins the editorial staff of THE NEW REPUBLIC this week as music critic. For the last four years Mr. Rothstein was a music critic at *The New York Times*. His writings on music and other subjects have appeared in *The New York Review of Books*, *Commentary*, *The Washington Post*, *The American Scholar*, and elsewhere. Mr. Rothstein succeeds such writers on music as Otis Ferguson and B. H. Haggin. We are delighted to reopen a distinguished chapter in the critical history of this journal.

□ THANKS TO a transmission garble, the meaning of a sentence in the last paragraph of Sidney Blumenthal's

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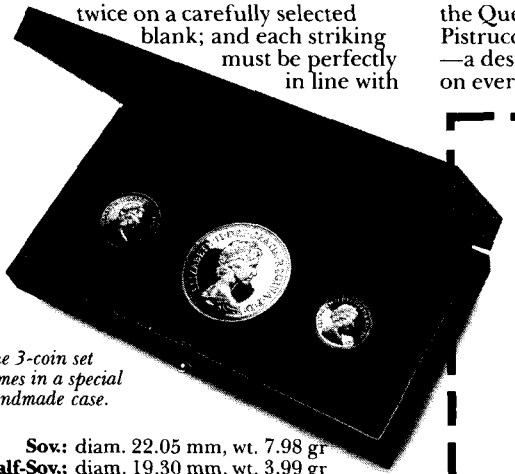

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article "Steel and Roses" (TNR, April 30) was changed. The sentence should have read: "Just as Mondale wants to restore the New Deal coalition, he"—not "Hart," as the garbled version had it—"wants to renew the economy that supported its constituencies."

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "For the first time in sixty years, a bill has been favorably reported in the U.S. Senate to relax the federal law against birth control. The new measure would permit the dissemination of birth control information, and the sale of birth control devices, under the advice of physicians, medical colleges, hospitals, or clinics. There are two schools among birth control advocates: the more moderate wing supports such a measure as this, and the other believes that birth control information and contraceptives should be available to anyone (or certainly any adult) who wants them. For a large part of the population this is already true; the law is disobeyed about as generally as was prohibition. The objections are that those who most need the information—the poor—have the greatest difficulty in getting it, and that many people receive unsound advice, and use harmful and ineffective products. Certainly the proposal now before the Senate would mean a tremendous advance over the present situation." ("The Week," The Editors, May 9, 1934.)

An honorable American tradition.

TUNE THAT NAME

THE disclosure, if that's not too strong a word, that Gary Hart used to be Gary Hartpence sent reporters to the court records. They learned that in September 1961, in response to a petition filed by four people—Gary himself, who was then 24 years old; Gary's wife Oletha (who now calls herself Lee); and Gary's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hartpence—a judge in Franklin County, Kansas, authorized the shorter form. Apparently Gary was already planning a political career and initiated the bobtailing process because he thought "Hart" would look better on a ballot. (He was probably right. Even so, "Hartpence," with its subliminal suggestions of thoughtfulness and budgetary prudence, might not be such a bad name for a Presidential contender in 1984.) It has also been learned that Hart fudges his age, that he changed his signature about ten years ago, that he's deleted from his current biography his stint as George McGovern's campaign manager in 1972, and that the original family name was not "Hart," as the Senator claims, but rather "Pence," as in, "Take care of the pence, for the pounds will take care of themselves," a maxim quoted by the Earl of Chesterfield.

The mild furor that ensued suggests that in changing his name—and making concomitant revisions in personal style and history—Hart did something shameful and petty, like kicking the dog. But he's got plenty of precedent and plenty of reason to believe that there was nothing either shameful or petty about it. Popes and kings take new names, and so do revolutionaries (Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin, for example); nuns, monks, and Black Muslims; "missing persons," fugitives from justice, and social climbers; and married women, at least until recently. At 21 Freud started calling himself "Sigmund" instead of "Sigismund" (the equivalent of "Hymie" in Austrian anti-Semitic jokes). Erik ("Identity Crisis") Erikson used to be Erik Homburger. Karen Christentze Dinesen became Isak Dinesen and before she was buried as Karen Blixen had at least half a dozen other names, all of them, according to Judith Thurman's biography, with "their own etiquette, logic, and geography."

New names have been a particularly American option, more American by far than apple pie, ever since the first adventurers came to the colonies to start from scratch and the colonies decided to change their name to the United States of America. "Before the Civil War," says Daniel Boorstin, "changing the names of towns had become almost as common as changing personal or family names was among immigrants in the later nineteenth century." Swedes, Armenians, Jews, and African slaves arrived without family names. Slaves took their owners' names—when Frederick Bailey escaped from his owner he changed his last name to Douglass. Thousands of newcomers either naturalized their names on arrival or had it done for them by immigration officers who had trouble with spelling and pronunciation. Like the Great Gatsby, new Americans claimed the right to make themselves over into the persons they wished to be. "James Gatz—that was really, or at least legally, his name. . . . Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself."

IN THE same spirit, countless American writers created themselves when they created new names. Samuel L. Clemens, a 27-year-old newspaper reporter, began signing his work "Mark Twain." The drifter Walter Whitman Jr. became the poet Walt Whitman. Nathanael West started out as Nathan Weinstein and Nathanial von Wallenstein Weinstein; he had invented a "new identity," says his biographer Jay Martin, and become "a new man by an act of his own will." David Henry Thoreau preferred to be known as Henry David Thoreau, Hawthorne added the "w" in his name and Faulkner the "u" in his, while, on another level, Pearl Grey of Zanesville, Ohio, was reborn as Zane Grey, the famous horse-opera librettist. The silent movies transformed Theodosia Goodman, daughter of a Cincinnati tailor, into the bedouin femme fatale Theda Bara, a name that, according to the front-office, was an anagram of "Arab Death." Samuel Goldwyn (born Goldfish), William Fox (born Fried), Lewis Selznick (born Zeleznik), and other moguls of this prototypical melting-pot industry were determined to transform their hirelings either into exotics on the Theda Bara model or WASPs

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with euphonious or at least inoffensive names. If the great dream factory could make Mary Pickford out of Gladys Smith, Rudolph Valentino out of Rodolpho d'Antonguolla, Cary Grant out of Archibald Leach, Judy Garland out of Frances Gumm, and John Garfield out of Julius Garfinkle, why shouldn't ordinary people take new names and have a go at fame and riches of their own? With the sole exception of a name, as Saul Bellow says in *Seize the Day*, "There's really very little that a man can change at will." Names are not just nominal. They are integral with what psychologists call self-image, a proposition that can be demonstrated easily by observing the effect of getting someone's name wrong, as Jimmy Carter (formerly James Earl Carter Jr.) did when he eulogized Hubert Humphrey as Hubert Horatio Hornblower.

In addition to Carter, Gary Hart can point to the present incumbent, who, at Nancy's urging, changed the pronunciation of Reagan to give it a little more class; to Mondale, whose grandfather was named Mundal; and to Gerald Ford, formerly Leslie Lynch King Jr. (Harry S Truman, on the other hand, insisted that "S" was his middle name and resisted all attempts to assert a period after it.) No one has ever faulted Wilson for doing with his first name, Thomas, what Gary Hart has done with his last. After a nervous breakdown at about age 25 and experiments with "T. W. Wilson" and "T. Woodrow Wilson," he decided to be "Tommy" no longer, as his repressive father called him, but "Woodrow," his mother's maiden name. Grant was just plain lucky—through no doing of his own, his name was his fortune. His parents had him christened Hiram Ulysses Grant, and on the flyleaves of his schoolbooks he signed himself "Hiram U. Grant," not a name (or acronym, HUG) to turn an opposing army's bowels to water. He was "Ulysses Hiram Grant" when he signed the adjutant's record at West Point, but an irreversible clerical error made him over into Ulysses Simpson Grant and eventually the general-in-chief and President whose first two initials stood for Uncle Sam, Unconditional Surrender, and United States.

Hart and his critics would do well to look up the chapters about name-changing in Ted Morgan's book, *On Becoming American*. Morgan, formerly Sanche de Gramont, is our leading authority on the subject. When he decided to Americanize himself, he says, he submitted his old name to a whiz at anagrams who, in addition to "Ted Morgan," came up with "Tom Danger," "O. D. Garment," "Mr. de Tango," "Mo Dragnet," and "R. D. Megaton." Morgan's brother argued that the whole business was a sign of arrested development, "identity diffusion," and probable impotence, and told him, "Psychoanalysts' offices are full of name-changers." Morgan stood firm: "They're also full of people who haven't changed their name."

JUSTIN KAPLAN

Justin Kaplan won the Pulitzer Prize for *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain* (Simon & Schuster) and is currently working on a biography of Charlie Chaplin.

Why this 'people's tax shelter' is a ripoff.

DOWN WITH THE I.R.A.

THIS IS a fitting season to review the misdeeds of the I.R.A. Not the Hibernian one; I have in mind the annual Easter rising of the individual retirement accounts.

As you surely have been reminded by countless banks, brokerage houses, insurance companies, and money market funds, April 16 was the deadline to open a 1983 I.R.A. Under present law—specifically, under the epic Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981—you may place in an I.R.A. up to $2,000 ($4,000 for working couples) and deduct that amount from your taxable income. The money must stay blocked until you are 59-and-a-half years old. An I.R.A., of course, saves you taxes; and because it does so by inducing you to save money, it should be good public policy to boot. If you have a joint taxable income of $60,000, the Internal Revenue Service would normally collect a tax of $16,014. But put $4,000 of your income into an I.R.A., and your tax liability drops to $14,414. In other words, $1,600 of your addition to savings—40 percent of the total—is a gift from the U.S. Treasury, which is to say, from other taxpayers. And the interest on that savings will also be tax-free.

Well, what's wrong with that, if it helps encourage the savings habit? We have been told by everyone from Arthur Laffer to Lester Thurow that Americans consume too much and save too little. The economy needs new capital investment to grow, and investment requires savings, doesn't it? So what's the problem?

The problem is that I.R.A.s don't increase the American savings rate; they almost surely decrease it. The reason is that the government pays out more money through this tax subsidy than the additional private savings that the subsidy induces. Every time the Treasury gives up a dollar of tax revenue, that increases the federal deficit by a dollar. And the deficit must be funded by tapping—what else?—the national pool of private savings. Thus, unless I.R.A.s increase private savings by more than they increase the public deficit, they are a deadweight economic loss.

In calendar year 1982, the first year that I.R.A.s were available to the entire working population, new additions to I.R.A. accounts totaled about $27 billion, but the evidence suggests that little if any of this was genuinely "new" savings. However, the I.R.A. tax preference cost the treasury $8.855 billion in forgone taxes. In 1984 the tax loss will be over $10 billion.

The subsidy is largely a waste because you can qualify for the tax break simply by shifting the form in which you hold existing savings. If you already have some savings, you get the I.R.A. tax deduction by transferring $2,000 from an ordinary account into an I.R.A. account; or by selling some stock and by opening an I.R.A.; or by holding your stock in an I.R.A. brokerage

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account. Many people did just that. Many other people who would have increased their savings anyway simply channeled some of their new savings into an I.R.A. And some people even borrowed money to open an I.R.A.—none of which adds a penny to savings. Chase Manhattan has been been proffering loans to finance new I.R.A.s. So has the Congressional Employees Credit Union, which is named for the sainted Wright Patman. Congressman Patman, that rogue populist, must be whirling in his vault. A 1982 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York concluded that virtually no I.R.A. savings represented genuinely "new" savings. I.R.A.s induce people to shift the form in which savings are held, but do little to encourage people to consume less and save more.

Distributively, the I.R.A. tax preference recalls Anatole France's observation that the rich and the poor had an equal right to sleep under the bridges of the Seine. The tax code, in its majesty, allows rich and poor alike to open I.R.A. accounts. If you are in the 50 percent bracket, the government contributes 50 percent of your I.R.A. savings. If you are in the 5 percent bracket, it contributes 5 percent. But not too many people in the 5 percent bracket have the discretionary income or the established savings to move into an I.R.A. According to the I.R.S., about one household in five put money into an I.R.A. in 1982. Fully 57 percent of households with incomes over $50,000 took advantage of I.R.A.s; and 34 percent of households with incomes of $30,000-$50,000 used them. But at the lower end of the scale, only 4.5 percent of $5,000-$10,000 households and 9.3 percent of $10,000-$15,000 households had I.R.A. savings.

THE SURPRISING thing is that anybody with just $10,000 a year would be socking money away in an I.R.A.. The explanation, it turns out, is that the relatively low-income I.R.A. users are mostly semiretired people, with modest income but substantial assets. You can keep right on putting tax-deferred income into an I.R.A. until age 70-and-a-half. One economist who has studied I.R.A.s cites the example of his own mother. At age 68, she is on Social Security. She also has a small investment income from her late husband's estate, plus a few thousand dollars a year that she earns working part time in a gift shop. Mark this carefully: the first $2,000 of her wages go into her I.R.A. She replaces this income by withdrawing an equal amount from her money market fund. This leaves her with no loss of consumption, but it shelters $2,000 of her income from taxation. Instead of having so many thousands of dollars in her money market fund, she has it in her I.R.A. Does this add one dime to the national supply of savings? Of course not. Does it reduce the national savings supply? Yes, because the lost tax revenue means that the Treasury must borrow that much more from other people's savings.

I.R.A.s, of course, are immensely popular; all subsidies are. They are very good personal financial strategy. If there are few editorials pointing out that they are also very bad public tax policy, perhaps that is because among those in what might be called the opinion leader class, "everybody" has an I.R.A. "Everybody" can play, in contrast to real estate limited partnerships or oil wells. I.R.A.s seem a kind of people's tax shelter, a shelter for the average guy. (As Nelson Rockefeller blurted out during his confirmation hearings, "Take the average man earning $50,000-$60,000 a year. . . .") But the I.R.A. universe is effectively limited to people with enough established wealth to shift assets from one account to another and lock money into an account that cannot be touched until late midlife, or enough discretionary income not to miss a few thousand dollars. Very few wage-earning families fall into that group. People who can't afford to use I.R.A.s, incidentally, pretty well define what was once the Democratic Party constituency. If this is the year of the yuppie, the I.R.A. is the ultimate yuppie program. And the consummate yuppie elder is Ronald Reagan. Imitators beware.

I.R.A.s are also a good illustration of the political risks of privatization. Last year the Social Security program proved to be the high ground of the welfare state. President Reagan, once an enemy of Social Security, found the program too popular to dismantle; he ended up championing its fiscal rescue. Social Security is a universal public program; it deliberately redistributes from the rich to the poor, and from the robust to the frail. I.R.A.s redistribute from poor to rich; and, unlike Social Security, what you take out depends entirely on what you could afford to put in. In 1983 virtually everybody in the electorate counted heavily on Social Security for their retirement. But what will happen in 2003, when the most affluent, most articulate segment of the electorate enjoys a nice cushion of tax-deferred, tax-subsidized I.R.A.s, and doesn't really need Social Security? Where will the constituency be for the public retirement program?

The I.R.A. shelter is an instructive challenge to the orthodox idea that economic policy requires an inevitable trade-off between equality and efficiency. In fact, I.R.A.s are a perfect marriage of *in*equality and *in*efficiency. They make the tax system more unequal by giving a disproportionate tax subsidy to the well-off, and they actually reduce the national savings rate at the same time.

In that respect, I.R.A.s are a perfect metaphor for the Reagan illusion. I.R.A.s offer class politics disguised as mass politics. They create the impression of a policy device that permits the affluent to do good by doing well. They conjure a mirage that subsidizing the well-off is necessary economics. In fact, the economic effect would be superior if the $10 billion tax subsidy was spent setting up retirement accounts for poor people. That at least would represent real savings. But unlike the other I.R.A., ours is respectable, popular, and seemingly protestant. Unfortunately, the American I.R.A. is anything but provisional. We shall probably never be rid of it.

BOB KUTTNER

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Can the Democrats register a victory?

SIGN 'EM UP

ACCORDING TO Ann Lewis, the political director of the Democratic National Committee, voter registration drives could bring her party a net gain of up to 3 million votes in this year's Presidential election. If 5 million newly registered voters go to the polls, Lewis estimates, 4 million will vote for the Democratic candidate and 1 million for President Reagan. Her calculations are part of a Democratic scenario in which the party captures the White House on the strength of a turnout in November of 100 million voters, 13 million more than voted in 1980. According to Lewis, surveys show that two-thirds of the new voters would pull the Democratic lever.

Will it happen? It's certainly true that the 55 million unregistered eligible voters are a potential electoral gold mine for the Democratic Party. Half of them are women; 7.2 million are black; 2.5 million are Hispanic. These low-income, traditionally Democratic groups are precisely the ones that have increased their political activity the most since the election of Ronald Reagan. In the 1982 midterm election, for example, 10 million more people voted than in 1978; the largest increases were among blacks, women, Hispanics, and blue-collar workers. The result was many Democratic victories in Congressional and gubernatorial races.

This year more than fifty national organizations, most of which want to see Reagan defeated in November, have launched registration campaigns designed to capitalize on the growing power of low-income voters. Some of these efforts have already met with success. A group called Human SERVE (Human Service Employees Registration, Voting, and Education) is organizing social workers to register poor people at food stamp offices, neighborhood clinics, and welfare agencies. The group, led by two left-liberal academics, Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, claims to have registered 100,000 new voters in New York since last summer, and 150,000 more in California, Texas, Michigan, and Florida. Human SERVE will stage a "Registration Summer" drive in twenty states. Its goal is to register 1 million low-income people.

By far the greatest potential for increased registration and turnout is among blacks. Some black organizations believe that, given blacks' resentment of the Reagan Administration and the excitement generated by Jesse Jackson's campaign, as many as 2 million new black voters could register by November. Some 160,000 new Democrats have registered in New York's minority neighborhoods since 1982; they turned out in droves to vote for Jackson in the primary. So did the 250,000 blacks in Chicago who registered to support Harold Washington's mayoral campaign in 1983, and the thousands more who signed up to back Wilson Goode in Philadelphia. And black registration is on the rise in the South. The nonpartisan Voter Education Project, which has conducted registration drives among southern blacks for two decades, says that since 1982 black registration has grown by 35,000 in Alabama and by 67,000 in Georgia.

The Democrats are also likely to benefit from a surge in Hispanic voting. The Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, which registers Mexican-Americans in Texas, California, Arizona, and New Mexico, may be the most effective registration organization in the country. (And the most sophisticated—both parties use its poll data and computerized voter lists.) This year the Southwest Voter Project is coordinating 185 local registration campaigns, with a goal of signing up 1 million Mexican-Americans by November. Largely because of its efforts, Mexican-American turnout soared in Texas in 1982, providing the Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Mark White, with his 240,000-vote margin of victory over the incumbent Republican, Bill Clements.

These are the sorts of numbers the Democrats like to quote. But whether registration will bring them the 3-million-vote dividend they anticipate is still very much an open question. One problem is money. According to Tony Harrison, who runs the Democratic National Committee's registration effort, the D.N.C.'s perennial fund-raising problems have prevented the Democrats from raising much—he won't say how much—of their original $1.5 million registration budget. "The D.N.C. has not been able to financially assist us," says Bob Slagle, the chairman of Texas' state Democratic committee. The lack of funds caused him to scale back his spring registration activities by half.

THE DEMOCRATS' lack of resources is partially compensated for by private foundations, which are making $3 million available to the nonpartisan registration efforts. But even those groups will face difficulties. In the South, several states "purge" their voting rolls of registrants who haven't voted recently; purges hit blacks hard because of their normally low turnout rate. In South Carolina black registration stood at 348,000 in March 1983. A purge knocked that total down to 311,000 in July; recent drives have so far brought the number back only to 334,000. And there are other, less quantifiable obstacles to registering large numbers of low-income minorities, who—their anti-Reagan and pro-Jackson feelings notwithstanding—are still mostly marginal participants in political life. Geraldine Thompson, who directs the Voter Education Project, says of black voters in the South: "Many are intimidated by registration sites. When they think of the courthouse, they think trouble."

The Democrats will also have to reckon with the Republicans' voter registration drive, which is that party's largest ever. The Republican National Committee and the Reagan-Bush '84 campaign have raised $4 million apiece for registration. Still, the Republicans face a major disadvantage: since most of their high-income core constituency is already registered, they can draw upon only a relatively small pool of unregistered potential supporters. They will probably have to be satisfied if they register

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enough people to limit the Democrats' share of new voters to 55 or 60 percent. But Linda Cherry, deputy director of voter projects for Reagan-Bush '84, insists that the party can reach its "very ambitious" goal of registering 2 million Reagan backers.

The Republicans will pick their spots carefully, devoting most of their resources to the Sun Belt—particularly states like Texas which have seen major recent influxes of high-income voters from the North. They will also target blue-collar workers in states like Ohio and Illinois and Miami's fiercely anti-Communist Cuban community. (Because a sizable minority of Hispanics support Reagan's conservative views on social issues, the Republicans are spending $2.5 million on a national drive to register them.) Despite their late start, the Republicans have already met with unexpected success; they claim to have signed up 225,000 new voters so far. In one recent test project in two Florida counties, the Republicans used direct mail and a computerized phone dialing system to identify potential Reagan supporters, then followed up with visits from volunteers. They had hoped to identify and register 10,000 Reagan backers in the three-week project—they got 17,000.

THE REPUBLICANS will have plenty of help. The Moral Majority has an open-ended voter registration budget. "Some other groups have to see how much money they have and then design their plans accordingly," says Moral Majority spokesman Cal Thomas. "We just make our plans and then go out and raise what we need." Moral Majority volunteers are currently making phone calls to more than 100,000 conservative clergymen, urging them to enroll their congregations in a nationwide "Voter Registration Week" scheduled for June. Gary Orren, a Harvard government professor who specializes in voter registration, points out that the Moral Majority has shown that it can register large numbers of people in the South: "Jeremiah Denton won [the 1980 Senate race in Alabama] because of voter registration among born-again Christians. They hit paydirt with a lot of low-income people with conservative cultural and social views."

And although the Republicans don't like to say so publicly, they and their allies are bound to benefit if there is a conservative white reaction against highly visible black registration drives. It happened when blacks ran for mayor in Chicago and Philadelphia, and such a reaction may be an unintended consequence of Jesse Jackson's campaign. In North Carolina, for example, the local Moral Majority registration chief, Lamarr Mooneyham, says, "If I could pay Jesse Jackson to come down here, I would. Every time he shows his face, conservatives go out and register to vote. There may be a racist element to that." Whites in Selma, Alabama, have formed a group called Selma Area Voter Enlistment (they call themselves SAVE) in order to register whites and keep new black registrants from electing blacks to the local government.

What does it all add up to? It's worth remembering that early-season enthusiasm has a way of inflating both sides' claims and projections about their registration drives. And much will depend on factors which still can't be quantified, like the extent of white backlash and the intensity of local races, particularly races in the South involving black candidates. Still, it's possible to construct a plausible scenario. The Voter Education Project believes that, all told, registration efforts in the South could produce 650,000 new black voters. Because half of all eligible black voters live in the South, this projection casts some doubt on the nationwide black goal of 2 million, so assume that total black registration will increase by 1.5 million. But assume also that the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project manages to sign up a million Hispanics, and that the Republicans and the Moral Majority register just 750,000 Reagan backers. Then add 250,000 others, who will be signed up by the various anti-Reagan drives. (This low total allows for the fact that efforts like Human SERVE will overlap with black and Hispanic drives.) That makes a nationwide total of 3.5 million new registrants. If every one of these voters casts a ballot (the actual average turnout rate for registered voters is 85 percent), and all the minorities vote against Reagan (a generous assumption, given the President's potential strength among Hispanics) Democrats would gain a total of 2 million votes—considerably less than what the party hopes for.

By relying on the registration and turnout of minorities and other groups at the lower end of the economic scale, the Democrats seem to be hoping for a repeat of the surge in voting participation sparked by the New Deal. In 1932 and 1936 Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Depression forged a winning coalition made up of the Democrats' traditional base plus voters previously outside the party—poor farmers, ethnic groups, and industrial workers. But without the advantages of an economic downturn and a compelling candidate, the Democrats are unlikely to fulfill their dream this time. "I suspect the polarization [left over from '82] will hurt Reagan only marginally," says Walter Dean Burnham, a political scientist from M.I.T. "He polarizes the middle and upper classes for him. Turnout may go up ten million, but it's perfectly plausible that it will split no more than sixty-forty Democratic."

In fact, a better historical parallel to this year may be the election of 1928. In that year, turnout rose by 7.5 million as Al Smith, the Catholic governor of New York, became the first Democrat to attract large numbers of votes from working-class and ethnic groups. Smith thus laid the groundwork for F.D.R's coalition—but his own Presidential bid was thwarted by public satisfaction with a booming economy, and by a Protestant backlash in the South. The combination of prosperity and backlash may again undo the Democrats in 1984. A net registration gain of 2 million votes for the Democrats would help, obviously; but Ronald Reagan's 1980 margin over the combined totals of Jimmy Carter and John Anderson was 2.7 million. For the Democrats, registration—retail politics, one might call it—is probably indispensable, but it's no substitute for the wholesale politics of issues, values, and ideas.

CHUCK LANE

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Must individual rights betray the common good?

MORALITY AND THE LIBERAL IDEAL

BY MICHAEL J. SANDEL

LIBERALS often take pride in defending what they oppose—pornography, for example, or unpopular views. They say the state should not impose on its citizens a preferred way of life, but should leave them as free as possible to choose their own values and ends, consistent with a similar liberty for others. This commitment to freedom of choice requires liberals constantly to distinguish between permission and praise, between allowing a practice and endorsing it. It is one thing to allow pornography, they argue, something else to affirm it.

Conservatives sometimes exploit this distinction by ignoring it. They charge that those who would allow abortions favor abortion, that opponents of school prayer oppose prayer, that those who defend the rights of Communists sympathize with their cause. And in a pattern of argument familiar in our politics, liberals reply by invoking higher principles; it is not that they dislike pornography less, but rather that they value toleration, or freedom of choice, or fair procedures more.

But in contemporary debate, the liberal rejoinder seems increasingly fragile, its moral basis increasingly unclear. Why should toleration and freedom of choice prevail when other important values are also at stake? Too often the answer implies some version of moral relativism, the idea that it is wrong to "legislate morality" because all morality is merely subjective. "Who is to say what is literature and what is filth? That is a value judgment, and whose values should decide?"

Relativism usually appears less as a claim than as a question. "Who is to judge?" But it is a question that can also be asked of the values that liberals defend. Toleration and freedom and fairness are values too, and they can hardly be defended by the claim that no values can be defended. So it is a mistake to affirm liberal values by arguing that all values are merely subjective. The relativist defense of liberalism is no defense at all.

What, then, can be the moral basis of the higher principles the liberal invokes? Recent political philosophy has offered two main alternatives—one utilitarian, the other Kantian. The utilitarian view, following John Stuart Mill, defends liberal principles in the name of maximizing the general welfare. The state should not impose on its citizens a preferred way of life, even for their own good, because doing so will reduce the sum of human happiness, at least in the long run; better that people choose for themselves, even if, on occasion, they get it wrong. "The only freedom which deserves the name," writes Mill in *On Liberty*, "is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it." He adds that his argument does not depend on any notion of abstract right, only on the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number. "I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being."

Many objections have been raised against utilitarianism as a general doctrine of moral philosophy. Some have questioned the concept of utility, and the assumption that all human goods are in principle commensurable. Others have objected that by reducing all values to preferences and desires, utilitarians are unable to admit qualitative distinctions of worth, unable to distinguish noble desires from base ones. But most recent debate has focused on whether utilitarianism offers a convincing basis for liberal principles, including respect for individual rights.

In one respect, utilitarianism would seem well suited to liberal purposes. Seeking to maximize overall happiness does not require judging people's values, only aggregating them. And the willingness to aggregate preferences without judging them suggests a tolerant spirit, even a democratic one. When people go to the polls we count their votes, whatever they are.

But the utilitarian calculus is not always as liberal as it first appears. If enough cheering Romans pack the Coliseum to watch the lion devour the Christian, the collective pleasure of the Romans will surely outweigh the pain of the Christian, intense though it be. Or if a big majority abhors a small religion and wants it banned, the balance of preferences will favor suppression, not toleration. Utilitarians sometimes defend individual rights on the grounds that respecting them now will serve utility in the long run. But this calculation is precarious and contingent. It hardly secures the liberal promise not to impose on some the values of others. As the majority will is an inadequate instrument of liberal politics—by itself it fails to secure individual rights—so the utilitarian philosophy is an inadequate foundation for liberal principles.

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The case against utilitarianism was made most powerfully by Immanuel Kant. He argued that empirical principles, such as utility, were unfit to serve as basis for the moral law. A wholly instrumental defense of freedom and rights not only leaves rights vulnerable, but fails to respect the inherent dignity of persons. The utilitarian calculus treats people as means to the happiness of others, not as ends in themselves, worthy of respect.

Contemporary liberals extend Kant's argument with the claim that utilitarianism fails to take seriously the distinction between persons. In seeking above all to maximize the general welfare, the utilitarian treats society as a whole as if it were a single person; it conflates our many, diverse desires into a single system of desires. It is indifferent to the distribution of satisfactions among persons, except insofar as this may affect the overall sum. But this fails to respect our plurality and distinctness. It uses some as means to the happiness of all, and so fails to respect each as an end in himself.

IN THE VIEW of modern-day Kantians, certain rights are so fundamental that even the general welfare cannot override them. As John Rawls writes in his important work, *A Theory of Justice*, "Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. . . . The rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests."

So Kantian liberals need an account of rights that does not depend on utilitarian considerations. More than this, they need an account that does not depend on any particular conception of the good, that does not presuppose the superiority of one way of life over others. Only a justification neutral about ends could preserve the liberal resolve not to favor any particular ends, or to impose on its citizens a preferred way of life. But what sort of justification could this be? How is it possible to affirm certain liberties and rights as fundamental without embracing some vision of the good life, without endorsing some ends over others? It would seem we are back to the relativist predicament—to affirm liberal principles without embracing any particular ends.

The solution proposed by Kantian liberals is to draw a distinction between the "right" and the "good"—between a framework of basic rights and liberties, and the conceptions of the good that people may choose to pursue within the framework. It is one thing for the state to support a fair framework, they argue, something else to affirm some particular ends. For example, it is one thing to defend the right to free speech so that people may be free to form their own opinions and choose their own ends, but something else to support it on the grounds that a life of political discussion is inherently worthier than a life unconcerned with public affairs, or on the grounds that free speech will increase the general welfare. Only the first defense is available in the Kantian view, resting as it does on the ideal of a neutral framework.

Now, the commitment to a framework neutral with respect to ends can be seen as a kind of value—in this sense the Kantian liberal is no relativist—but its value consists precisely in its refusal to affirm a preferred way of life or conception of the good. For Kantian liberals, then, the right is prior to the good, and in two senses. First, individual rights cannot be sacrificed for the sake of the general good; and second, the principles of justice that specify these rights cannot be premised on any particular vision of the good life. What justifies the rights is not that they maximize the general welfare or otherwise promote the good, but rather that they comprise a fair framework within which individuals and groups can choose their own values and ends, consistent with a similar liberty for others.

Of course, proponents of the rights-based ethic notoriously disagree about what rights are fundamental, and about what political arrangements the ideal of the neutral framework requires. Egalitarian liberals support the welfare state, and favor a scheme of civil liberties together with certain social and economic rights—rights to welfare, education, health care, and so on. Libertarian liberals defend the market economy, and claim that redistributive policies violate peoples' rights; they favor a scheme of civil liberties combined with a strict regime of private property rights. But whether egalitarian or libertarian, rights-based liberalism begins with the claim that we are separate, individual persons, each with our own aims, interests, and conceptions of the good; it seeks a framework of rights that will enable us to realize our capacity as free moral agents, consistent with a similar liberty for others.

WITHIN ACADEMIC philosophy, the last decade or so has seen the ascendance of the rights-based ethic over the utilitarian one, due in large part to the influence of Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*. The legal philosopher H. L. A. Hart recently described the shift from "the old faith that some form of utilitarianism must capture the essence of political morality" to the new faith that "the truth must lie with a doctrine of basic human rights, protecting specific basic liberties and interests of individuals. . . . Whereas not so long ago great energy and much ingenuity of many philosophers were devoted to making some form of utilitarianism work, latterly such energies and ingenuity have been devoted to the articulation of theories of basic rights."

But in philosophy as in life, the new faith becomes the old orthodoxy before long. Even as it has come to prevail over its utilitarian rival, the rights-based ethic has recently faced a growing challenge from a different direction, from a view that gives fuller expression to the claims of citizenship and community than the liberal vision allows. The communitarian critics, unlike modern liberals, make the case for a politics of the common good. Recalling the arguments of Hegel against Kant, they question the liberal claim for the priority of the right over the good, and the picture of the freely choosing individual it embodies. Fol-

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lowing Aristotle, they argue that we cannot justify political arrangements without reference to common purposes and ends, and that we cannot conceive of ourselves without reference to our role as citizens, as participants in a common life.

THIS DEBATE reflects two contrasting pictures of the self. The rights-based ethic, and the conception of the person it embodies, were shaped in large part in the encounter with utilitarianism. Where utilitarians conflate our many desires into a single system of desire, Kantians insist on the separateness of persons. Where the utilitarian self is simply defined as the sum of its desires, the Kantian self is a choosing self, independent of the desires and ends it may have at any moment. As Rawls writes, "The self is prior to the ends which are affirmed by it; even a dominant end must be chosen from among numerous possibilities."

The priority of the self over its ends means I am never defined by my aims and attachments, but always capable of standing back to survey and assess and possibly to revise them. This is what it means to be a free and independent self, capable of choice. And this is the vision of the self that finds expression in the ideal of the state as a neutral framework. On the rights-based ethic, it is precisely because we are essentially separate, independent selves that we need a neutral framework, a framework of rights that refuses to choose among competing purposes and ends. If the self is prior to its ends, then the right must be prior to the good.

Communitarian critics of rights-based liberalism say we cannot conceive ourselves as independent in this way, as bearers of selves wholly detached from our aims and attachments. They say that certain of our roles are partly constitutive of the persons we are—as citizens of a country, or members of a movement, or partisans of a cause. But if we are partly defined by the communities we inhabit, then we must also be implicated in the purposes and ends characteristic of those communities. As Alasdair MacIntyre writes in his book, *After Virtue*, "What is good for me has to be the good for one who inhabits these roles." Open-ended though it be, the story of my life is always embedded in the story of those communities from which I derive my identity—whether family or city, tribe or nation, party or cause. In the communitarian view, these stories make a moral difference, not only a psychological one. They situate us in the world and give our lives their moral particularity.

What is at stake for politics in the debate between unencumbered selves and situated ones? What are the practical differences between a politics of rights and a politics of the common good? On some issues, the two theories may produce different arguments for similar policies. For example, the civil rights movement of the 1960s might be justified by liberals in the name of human dignity and respect for persons, and by communitarians in the name of recognizing the full membership of fellow citizens wrongly excluded from the common life of the nation. And where liberals might support public education in hopes of equipping students to become autonomous individuals, capable of choosing their own ends and pursuing them effectively, communitarians might support public education in hopes of equipping students to become good citizens, capable of contributing meaningfully to public deliberations and pursuits.

On other issues, the two ethics might lead to different policies. Communitarians would be more likely than liberals to allow a town to ban pornographic bookstores, on the grounds that pornography offends its way of life and the values that sustain it. But a politics of civic virtue does not always part company with liberalism in favor of conservative policies. For example, communitarians would be more willing than some rights-oriented liberals to see states enact laws regulating plant closings, to protect their communities from the disruptive effects of capital mobility and sudden industrial change. More generally, where the liberal regards the expansion of individual rights and entitlements as unqualified moral and political progress, the communitarian is troubled by the tendency of liberal programs to displace politics from smaller forms of association to more comprehensive ones. Where libertarian liberals defend the private economy and egalitarian liberals defend the welfare state, communitarians worry about the concentration of power in both the corporate economy and the bureaucratic state, and the erosion of those intermediate forms of community that have at times sustained a more vital public life.

Liberals often argue that a politics of the common good, drawing as it must on particular loyalties, obligations, and traditions, opens the way to prejudice and intolerance. The modern nation-state is not the Athenian polis, they point out; the scale and diversity of modern life have rendered the Aristotelian political ethic nostalgic at best and dangerous at worst. Any attempt to govern by a vision of the good is likely to lead to a slippery slope of totalitarian temptations.

COMMUNITARIANS REPLY, rightly in my view, that intolerance flourishes most where forms of life are dislocated, roots unsettled, traditions undone. In our day, the totalitarian impulse has sprung less from the convictions of confidently situated selves than from the confusions of atomized, dislocated, frustrated selves, at sea in a world where common meanings have lost their force. As Hannah Arendt has written, "What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and to separate them." Insofar as our public life has withered, our sense of common involvement diminished, we lie vulnerable to the mass politics of totalitarian solutions. So responds the party of the common good to the party of rights. If the party of the common good is right, our most pressing moral and political project is to revitalize those civic republican possibilities implicit in our tradition but fading in our time. □

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Why Johnny can't fight and Uncle Sam can't win.

AMERICA'S BROKEN WAR MACHINE

BY ARTHUR T. HADLEY

WHEN the planning for a hostage rescue mission to Iran got underway in January 1980, it was quickly recognized that helicopter pilots would be among the mission's major problems. Because of the Navy's initial insistence that only Navy pilots could take off from Navy ships, the first set of pilots came from the Navy. Because of President Carter's concern about maintaining absolute secrecy, neither the pilots themselves nor the commander of the Atlantic Fleet, who supplied the pilots, were told what the mission was to be. The word from the Pentagon was only that pilots would be needed for unspecified purposes for three days. Not surprisingly, the commander of the Atlantic Fleet, stationed in the Indian Ocean for minesweeping duty in the event of a crisis in Afghanistan, did not send his best men. When the selected pilots learned what the mission was, two of them simply refused, saying they had not joined the Navy to fly suicide missions. The first few dozen pilots and technicians were sent back to their units because of their lack of skill. Another call for volunteers went out.

This time the Marines were selected to supply the volunteers, because the Marines were the only branch of the armed forces still without a role in this prestigious undertaking. (The Navy was supplying the ships, the Air Force the transport planes and pilots, and the Army the Delta Force commandos who were to carry out the actual rescue.) Through no fault of their own, the Marine pilots chosen had not been trained for any missions requiring such complex flying skills. Nor were they happy about the nature of the mission for which they had "volunteered." Because the forces combined for the mission were not in an established unit, the Marines were uncertain about who actually commanded them. (An Army general was nominally in command but the Marines did not think they had to take orders from an officer of a rival service.) Discipline was lax; the Marine pilots did a great deal of drinking and blew some dope. In the Arizona desert town of Yuma, near where the combined forces were training, several Marines told some some of the girls down at the local bars about the rescue mission, thus potentially imperiling the entire operation.

There was consternation—and paralysis—at the Joint Chiefs of Staff level when the security breach was reported. By law the Joint Chiefs have no command authority over any individual service; in order to take any action, they must agree unanimously. This rule by committee prevented the obvious solution: a single officer should have been put in command, with authority to requisition pilots trained for dangerous overland missions. (More than 140 Air Force chopper pilots were available, all of whom had flown in Vietnam and had trained for years for just such a mission as the Iranian rescue.) But under the present organization of the Defense Department, it couldn't be done. The only result of the security breach was that the F.B.I. hurriedly blanketed the bars of Yuma. The Joint Chiefs made plans to cancel the mission if the F.B.I. reported the Iranians had learned of the plans. Fortunately, the patriotism of the women proved better than the discipline of the Marines. The secret never went beyond Yuma.

But the operation that skirted disaster in the desert of Arizona ended in tragedy in the desert of Iran. The C.I.A.'s National Intelligence Summary on Iran had specifically mentioned the probability of low-level dust clouds in the flight area. But the information never reached the Marine pilots. They plowed through a fierce sandstorm. If they had flown 400 feet higher they would have had clear, safe flying. One pilot turned back. When a second pilot saw an operational warning light flash on his instrument panel, he ditched his craft, not knowing what his Air Force counterparts had long known: that the machine could have been safely flown for at least another fifteen hours. A third helicopter suffered the failure of a hydraulic pump, and it had to be abandoned. With only five helicopters working, the mission had to be aborted at the desert staging area, and in the confusion of retreat a fiery accident took the lives of eight men.

The Iranian debacle was spectacular and humiliating, but it shouldn't have been surprising. From the political infighting over planning to uncertain command to the brave but ill-trained men on the ground to the faulty equipment, the Iranian mission was all too accurate a reflection of the state of our armed forces. And the unnecessary reasons for the failure have not changed. Thirty-five years before, the United States and its Allies had beaten the awesome war machines of the Germans and the Japanese. Now, without a shot being fired, an attempt to res-

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cue hostages from a small power had ended in disastrous defeat. Why?

On TV news and on Capitol Hill, the Defense Department usually appears as monolithic, and if not always efficient, at least organized to perform the essential duty of national defense in a time of emergency. In fact, the Defense Department, like any other large institution, is a product of its history, and that history cripples it today.

First, what I call the Great Divorce—the less-than-amiable separation of the military from the political and intellectual elite of the country—has harmed our national defense in untold ways. Whole segments of our society, ranging from the media to academia to the world of business and finance, have regarded the military as an unwanted stepchild. This split began after World War I, opened after the Korean War (which was far more unpopular than is now remembered), and became complete during Vietnam. By robbing the military of leadership, skills, and coordination, the Great Divorce helped create our troubles today.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Second, the Defense Department was built on the illogical premise that the four branches of the armed services are, and ought to be, autonomous institutions. The standing rivalries between the services were institutionalized when the department was created and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (J.C.S.) established after World War II. The department is managed by a series of committees whose members constantly change. Nothing can be accomplished without endless lobbying based not on defense needs but on service or political interest. And the rivalries that rend the entire Defense Department proved disastrous in the rescue mission.

The Great Divorce and interservice rivalries combine to incapacitate the United States in the critical area of what soldiers call teeth-to-tail, the ratio of fighting resources to support resources. The public, not understanding the nature of the military enterprise, thinks it need only pay for weapons; the divided services bicker over how to coordinate their efforts. The Great Divorce also deprived the country of even minimally qualified soldiers in the 1970s. The problem of numbers has been solved by the 1982 recession, but we still lag far behind other countries in the skill of our combatants.

To discover just how crippled the U.S. military has become, you have to go inside the Kingdom of Defense. You have to fly the planes, sail the ships, and slog through the mud. Since World War II, I have been both a participant in and observer of this kingdom. I first watched the blue-gray color of death rise into the face of an American soldier when I was a 20-year-old lieutenant in Brittany. I watched my last American war casualty—or so I pray—in Vietnam as a 46-year-old reporter. Thus I have seen both the big picture and the small. Often the small picture tells you more. There were, for instance, all those "Hamlet Evaluation Statistics" that showed we were winning in Vietnam. But when I walked through the villages, it was immediately apparent that the statistics were meaningless. It's the same today. Everywhere you look you find a gap between the claim and the reality.

It is 5 A.M., and I am standing before an eight-engine B-52 at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. The Pentagon calls the B-52 our first line of defense against the Soviet Union, and I'm here to test that first line by flying on a mission that simulates a flight behind the Iron Curtain. Beside me is Tom, a captain, who is the pilot; and Bruce, a major and instructor pilot in B-52s, who is there as my chaperone and to see how the co-pilot shapes up. Bruce is a calm and competent former tobacco farmer from Arkansas whose role in the Vietnam War was to fly small airplanes low over the jungle to lift people we claimed were never there in and out of places we denied existed. We are going to take this BUF (Big Ugly Fucker, as the pilots lovingly call their B-52s) at 400 miles an hour 200 feet above the badlands of Oklahoma and Kansas. Armed with nuclear cruise and short-range attack missiles, the B-52s are meant to be effective weapons well into the 1990s. Bombers still carry 50 percent of the megatonnage we plan to deliver as part of our deterrent second strike. How good are they?

I have found that one of the best methods for eliciting answers to my questions is to take people by surprise. I have seldom been deliberately lied to by the professional military. But in all large organizations, truth tends to get diluted as it filters toward the top, and, like the rest of us,

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members of the armed services often confuse what they would like to see happen with what is actually happening. The Strategic Air Command Headquarters had arranged for me to take a B-52 flight out of Carswell Air Force Base in Texas. At the last moment I had been able to switch from that long-prearranged flight to one here at Barksdale, chosen suddenly and, I hope, at random.

I watch the pilots' faces as they examine the logs of the airplane, and I realize that I have succeeded in picking a bird at random. Neither Bruce nor Tom likes what he sees. The plane is twenty years old. It flew in Vietnam. It has 9,994 hours of flying time on it. (Some BUFs, the first of which were delivered to the Air Force in 1952, have over 13,000 hours.) The No. 2 engine is turning over too slowly. The pitch and roll instruments on both the pilot's and the co-pilot's side, instruments vital for flying blind, are behaving erratically. Bruce and I walk around the outside of the B-52 for the preflight check. The tires are very worn. Not only do they have no tread, the cord is showing through in places. "They grip better that way," says Bruce with a smile. No commercial airliner would take off with one-quarter of this B-52's problems.

THE POOR condition of our military equipment dates back to the 1960s, when two Presidents, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, disguised the cost of the Vietnam War by robbing parts of the Defense Department that had nothing to do with the war. Particularly hard hit by this hidden transfer of funds were the troops in Europe supporting NATO and such special missions as antiterrorism and training foreign forces. We began to develop a double standard of performance by which we tolerated, for reasons of economy and/or ideology, standards in the military we would not tolerate in civilian life.

At 7:10 the three pilots, the crew, and I climb up through a small hole in the belly of the aircraft. As we begin to check out the plane, its electric current fails, and the gas runs out on the ground generator. The ground crew says it's due to a faulty gas gauge. Tom's guess is that it's due to the mechanic shortage. (Without a draft, able mechanics are no longer joining the Air Force to avoid conscription.) We have trouble starting the engine. Bruce's magic finally works on No. 4 on the left side; but No. 5 on the right is intransigent. Under Bruce's guidance the crew tries a series of tricks that would make Lindbergh proud. The old plane rocks and shakes as if a herd of moose were stampeding through the cockpit. But the engine will not grab hold. "We have a 'no-start' on No. 5," Tom reports sadly to headquarters. Twenty minutes later the master mechanics arrive in their truck and take the cover off No. 5 engine. They stick the leads of the ground generator into the engine's innards to jump start it, just as you do with your car when the battery is dead.

After we have gotten off the ground and cruised for an hour or so at 23,000 feet, the tanker that is to refuel us in the air shows up as a white dot on our infrared screen. Inside the aircraft everyone becomes wide awake and the routine returns to tense professionalism. The dot on the screen gets bigger and bigger. Finally there is the tanker aircraft in our windshield, straight ahead and a thousand feet above us. The navigator keeps calling out the tanker's position. "Coming up on a mile and a half. Coming up on a mile." We have all seen hundreds of pictures of aerial refueling in magazines, TV, and movies. It remains a consummate piece of flying. Nor is there any way to escape the mating image. The great swollen red-tipped pizzle of the tanker trailing down and behind. The two silver beasts bobbing and weaving like two ancient dinosaurs—except they are moving at 225 miles an hour. The tense white face of the boom guider peering out the rear window of the tanker. The dull, hard thunk as the fuel boom penetrates the hole right above us in the cockpit.

This symbiotic relationship of bomber and tanker is a concise illustration of the need to think about defense not in terms of weapons but, at the very least, in terms of weapons systems. The bomber is useless without the tanker. It cannot make it to the target. It does no good to spend millions on bombers and not have enough tankers. Again, it's the tooth-to-tail challenge. How much support and supply do you need, and how many actual weapons? As the weapons become more deadly and complex, the tooth-to-tail argument becomes far more complicated. And it affects all the forces, not just the Air Force. For example, it makes no sense to spend millions on tanks and not have spare parts. When the 115 tanks in a German tank brigade go into battle, 350 tons (yes, tons) of spare tank parts move with them on trucks. When a U.S. tank brigade goes into battle, its far fewer spare parts stay put in a warehouse. Why? Congress won't supply funds for the tail, thinking anything but teeth a waste of money. Which tank brigade do you think will be fighting more successfully on the third day? Which will have more dead soldiers because of failed weapons? The price of the Great Divorce will be dead American soldiers.

NOW AT 200 feet, weaving through the low hills and rolling fields of Kansas to practice avoiding radar, Tom and the co-pilot pull their seats down and begin flying by the Forward-Looking Infrared and the radar terrain probe. Suddenly the vital gyro instruments that show how a plane is flying, whether it is upright or turning, all begin to spin and tumble on both the pilot's and the co-pilot's side. As we continue to weave above the hills and farmland, Bruce opens a can of apple juice and drinks it down calmly. "This happens all the time," he says. He squeezes the can together with his hands and then jumps on it a bit, making of the juice can a truncated "v" with a bubble at one end. He takes out his pocket knife and opens up part of the instrument panel, revealing the pumps of the worthless gyros. He wedges his sculptured juice can beneath the forward edge of the vacuum pumps. He ties the juice can securely in place with a bandage from the first aid kit. The gyros spin back to life. Bruce fits the instrument panel back together with his pocket knife. We go back to flying the mission.

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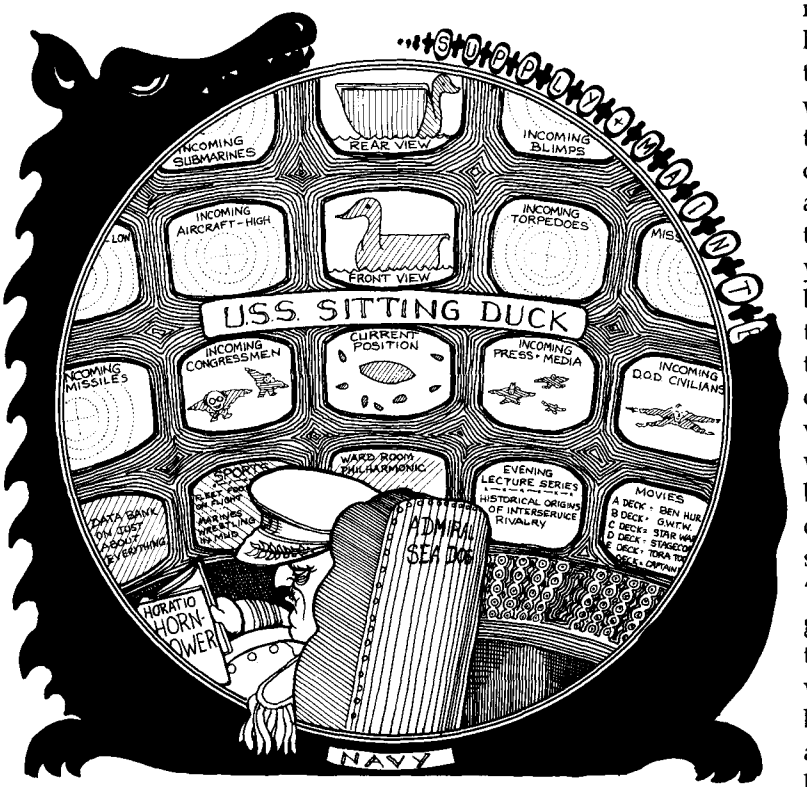
I take an expedition to another corner of the Kingdom of Defense. The carrier U.S.S. *Saratoga*, after extensive repairs in the Philadelphia Navy Base, is on her shakedown cruise off the Florida coast. I descend into the bowels of the carrier to the radar and computer room, the electronic warfare center. In the darkened room, bank upon bank of TV screens, each about a foot in diameter, keep track of the outside world around the carrier. The scene is even more cramped and complex than that in a metropolitan air-traffic control center. There are screens that track submarines under water, screens that track distant, high-flying aircraft, screens that track lower-flying aircraft and missiles in the vicinity of the ships, screens that control the firing of guns, screens that control the firing of missiles, and screens that show all this data at once.

I was first flown onto a carrier during the Korean War; and though planes have since grown faster and more complex and the carriers bigger, little about their essential operation has changed. I am concerned about the efficiency of weapons systems that remain so close to their successful origins in a rapidly changing world. Are they iceboxes in a world of refrigerators? (I have the same uneasy feelings about large air bases and elaborate military headquarters.) All of this is reinforced by the new face of naval warfare seen in the Falklands war.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

That little war taught us a lot about how modern wars are fought—if we're willing to learn. May 25, 1982, had dawned much the same as previous days off the Falkland Islands, bitterly cold, windy, and, for patrolling British ships, dangerously clear. Crews on board a British radar sentry ship actually saw the red glow of the Exocet missile fired by the Argentines as it skimmed the sea at supersonic speed toward the H.M.S. *Invincible*, one of two British aircraft carriers, and a vital part of British seapower. The *Invincible* and the other fighting ships in the task force fired their weapons at the incoming missile and fired their "chaff," four-inch-long strips of aluminum, to confuse the missile's radar. The antimissile missiles missed; the chaff worked. The several observers later claimed to have seen the Argentine missile hesitate, trying to tell the real from the bogus targets.

Two miles away the large cargo ship, the M.V. *Atlantic Conveyor*, was carrying helicopters and other supplies critically needed by the troops ashore. In graphic illustration of the tooth-to-tail argument, the *Atlantic Conveyor*, the primary resupply ship of the British Falkland forces, had not been issued antimissile weapons or chaff because, despite the importance of her cargo, she had not been regarded as a fighting ship. The Exocet found the *Atlantic Conveyor* and sank her, making the battle for the Falklands desperately close.

The Falklands battle confirmed what many had believed: that it is inside the ship's electronic warfare center, in its string of radar and computer rooms, where the commander will win or lose his war. A year before the Falklands battle, I was on a sister ship of the H.M.S. *Sheffield*, a destroyer also sunk by an Exocet missile off the Falklands. The young officers on board had complained to me about the location of the radar and computer center as too vulnerable because it was right behind the bridge. "It's the senior officers who design the ships," they explained. "They think they are going to be moving between the electronic warfare center and the bridge. You won't see anything from the bridge."

There's no forgetting that inside the *Saratoga*. Most of those I speak to in the center are keen on their work because the week before they had watched two Russian reconnaissance "Bear" aircraft track their ship "for real." One of the computer programmers calls up a practice three-missile attack on the carrier. On the screen before me I watch the little dots move toward our ship and get identified as hostile, while on screens nearby two petty officers try to bring the *Saratoga*'s own missiles to bear on the "hostiles." In this computer game they get two out of three. Forward in the long, narrow control room is the captain's swivel chair with a set of consoles pressing in around it, like the multifaceted eyes of a huge spider. These particular consoles are designed to bring all the battle information together so that the captain can fight the carrier. I ask the men if the captain comes down to train with them. Now and then, they say, without much conviction.

Part of the problem is that the face of warfare is chang-

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ing faster than the minds of many warriors. A recently retired admiral is on board the *Saratoga* at the same time as I am. He asks me whether I don't think that the British admiral fighting in the Falklands would have preferred two large carriers like the *Saratoga* to the two small jump jet carriers he possessed. I reply politely that that is not really the question at issue. With weapons costs so high, the British admiral might not have gotten two carriers. If he had the choice between just *one* carrier like this or two such carriers as he had, which would he prefer? The admiral ponders that one and answers with a noncommittal "Humph." And the question is not just one of cost. The more war-fighting assets you gather in one place, the more lucrative a target you make for the enemy, the easier it is for him to find that target, and the more effort he will expend to kill that target. Again, this is true not just of big ships like this carrier, but of big headquarters, big airbases, and big concentrations of troops (like the Marines housed in one building in Beirut).

Take the case of Arapahoe, a naval weapons project that has been under consideration at the Pentagon for five years. Arapahoe represents a new approach to getting supplies from the United States to a war area, say in Europe or the Middle East. The old convoy system merely provides the enemy with a gigantic target. The other side, easily locating the supply ship convoy (like the *Atlantic Conveyor*) by satellite or other means, can deploy submarines with guided torpedoes (like the Exocet) and bombers with guided missiles against it. Arapahoe, in contrast, puts on each freighter an antisubmarine helicopter package—one or two antisubmarine helicopters, some missile "spoofers" (electronic devices that distort the radar signals that attacking missiles key in on), and a crate-like hangar to house it all. Then the freighters are sent out at random across the ocean: no concentration, no big target. The enemy has to divide his forces to hunt the freighters. And when the submarine finds the freighter, the helicopter has a good chance of getting the sub. Whereas in attacking the convoy the enemy might lose one submarine for every ten freighters, a winning ratio for him, under Arapahoe he might lose one sub for every three freighters, a losing ratio for him.

TO ME the idea makes total sense in an age of precision guidance, in which it is crucial to avoid becoming a lucrative target. Further, the idea is, or should be, quintessentially American. Instead of a vast concentration of forces rigidly controlled by a senior commander, each little unit has its own fate in its own hands, relying on its own brains, courage, training, and discipline. But senior admirals fight this weapons system, partly perhaps because it diminishes their control. Of course, Arapahoe may not work. What has to be done is to get some freighters and submarines out there and test the idea. This hasn't yet happened.

The British Navy actually offered the American Navy a ship and $200,000 to help develop the program. Still, the admirals who command the U.S. Navy could find neither the money nor the people nor the time for it. Like medieval guilds, the different departments of the Navy fought Arapahoe. Each saw the project as a threat to the way it was planning to handle the problem of hostile submarines attacking supply lines. The shore-based and carrier-based flyers said they could do the job with escort carriers. The "black-shoe Navy," the Navy of surface ships such as destroyers and cruisers, said it had the A.S.W. (Anti-Submarine Warfare) problem licked, and didn't need Arapahoe. Some genius thought of giving the program to the Naval Reserve. The Reserve, a minor and weak guild, was interested in the idea; but the top Navy brass reminded the Reserve brass where their promotions came from, and the Reserve dropped the program fast. I know a captain and former fighter pilot who argued that if naval aviators were freed of the antisub mission, they could concentrate on delivering offensive power ashore. But his was a lonely voice, because if the aviators lost the A.S.W. mission, that would mean fewer carriers, fewer fliers, fewer promotions.

Now that the *Atlantic Conveyor*, her skipper, and her precious cargo lie at the bottom of the South Atlantic, the U.S. Navy is taking another look at Arapahoe. But so far there has been no real movement toward testing the concept.

THE PROBLEMS of our defense in the air and on the seas recur on the ground. In the fall of each year the troops and tanks of NATO race down the streets, poke through the woods, and tear up the fields of northern Europe. Overhead jets punish the ear as they streak 500 feet above the ground. The object of these annual exercises, now in their thirtieth year, is to train everyone from privates to generals, to expose weaknesses, to build on strengths. The name for these annual exercises is "Reforger." If you ask the generals and admirals how things are going on Reforger, they reply, "Just fine." But if you look closely, things do not look fine at all.

I am watching a Rhine crossing. I ask a German antiaircraft gunner on one of the barge-like ferries making the crossing if a helicopter flying by is "*Feind oder Freund*" ("Foe or Friend").

"*Freundlich*," replys the noncommissioned officer in charge, before the gunner can answer.

How does he know? "If they are enemy, the Lieutenant will tell me."

A couple of hours later I ask one of the American antiaircraft gunners guarding an American supply column if the planes sweeping over the column are friend or foe.

"Friendlies."

"How do you know?"

"They have orange triangles on them."

"In real life how would you tell?"

"Anything I can hit is too close. I'd shoot them."

Just outside one of the new bedroom suburbs of the Pied Piper's town of Hamelin, a British unit has skillfully set up and camouflaged an antiaircraft-guided missile company. It is tracking on radar a bunch of incoming helicopters and

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fighter planes. Are they friend or foe? No one is quite sure because the code word to identify planes today has not reached us yet. From the way the fighters and helicopters are maneuvering, they seem about to attack our bridge. We theoretically blast them from the skies. The helicopters land their troops in a soccer field and they race toward the bridge. They are friendlies, come to help us defend the bridge. A tough German tank colonel watching this little play punches me in the shoulder and remarks: "NATO is so fucked up, its only hope lies in the responsibility of every soldier to disobey orders."

A few days later I'm traveling with a Dutch reconnaissance battalion. It's raining and the cold drops of water pelt against the glass domes of the three French-built Alouette helicopters. We are searching for a bridge over the Weser, a river in northern Germany, put in by a German engineer battalion the night before. At 500 feet we skim over the gray-greens of the north German plain beneath greasy clouds. In the lead chopper the pilot and I stare through the beading water on the windshield and try to locate the bridge. It's nowhere near the spot marked on the corps commander's map. The Dutch helicopters have no secure radios over which they could talk without being intercepted, no electronic devices to identify them to antiaircraft gunners and other planes as friendly or to indicate whether they are being tracked by enemy radar. Finally, we find the bridge five miles from its map location, and make a wet landing in the mud.

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I draw one of the pilots aside and ask him: "How long do you think you would last without electronic tracking equipment?"

"We would be down much lower."

"I know that. Skimming the earth at tree-top level. But how long?"

By now other pilots have drifted over to listen. They are a disgusted group of men. "You Americans had your minute men," one pilot says. "We call ourselves the ten-minute men."

That's about what I would give them and many of the American troops. The prospect of dying after ten minutes without having accomplished anything discourages a soldier. There are many discouraged soldiers in NATO. And let no one think I am writing this to put down the Dutch. Those same Dutch troops finished ahead of the Americans in both the NATO tank firing and the reconnaissance competitions.

This inability of modern armies and air forces to know what is going on is not confined to the lower-level troops. It goes right to the top. Three years earlier, General Steinhoff, then the NATO air commander, estimated that on five days of maneuvers, friendly forces had shot down all his planes. Last year on maneuvers General Bernard Rogers, the NATO supreme commander, wanted to locate and congratulate the Danish battalion taking part in the maneuvers. He flew around in his helicopter for three hours and never found the Danish troops.

To be fair, things are better than they were in 1974, the post-Vietnam nadir, when soldiers were murdering their officers and destroying their equipment, drugs were rampant, and weapons and facilities were neglected and poorly maintained. Even qualitatively the Russians then had a decisive edge. When you go into the field now, you see the improvement everywhere. Gone are the vacant faces, with the slightly slack jaws and dead eyes that peered out from the tank hatches and infantry fighting vehicles. In those perilous times such men—high school dropouts barely reading at the fourth-grade level, numb to discipline, alien to responsibility, and overwhelmed by the complexity of their equipment—would, after two years in the Army, often be commanding tanks and squads. There was no one else.

In 1980 the tank company I rode with lost eleven of its twenty tanks in three days of maneuver through mechanical failure. (Think what would have happened if someone fired a shot at them!) The company I rode with in 1982 only lost two tanks in three days. That's up from the minors to the majors. For the first time since the contest was established in 1977, the United States in 1982 did not finish last in the Canadian Cup, NATO's annual tank gunnery competition. We finished next to last.

So we still have a long way to go. On the tank firing range, a muddy trail through fields and woods, U.S. crews get a passing score if they can identify a pop-up canvas

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target and fire at it in forty seconds. The battalion I watched only qualified for the gunnery competition with two special representatives from the factory providing help from the sidelines. Most of the crews firing were taking close to a minute to identify the pop-up targets and fire. In the real world you get about ten tense seconds. On a close to identical range, German crews average three seconds between the time the target popped and they fired. We feel good because the sergeants in our tank companies now average five years' experience, but when I visit the antitank battalion of a German Panzer Brigade, I find that the junior sergeant has seven years' experience, and that the average is seventeen. The Israelis take their ablest and most aggressive draftees and select the top 5 percent to go to a special school for tank commanders. In 1980 our tank commanders averaged below the top 50 percent of all volunteers on the General Aptitude Test. And the unfortunate truth is that U.S. standards are so warped that the Army will report as combat ready such tank battalions as the one I watched.

To disguise differences in crew selection and professionalism, we devise easier tests for our men. For example, a general commanding an Army division in Europe told me proudly that the men in his division had achieved 95 percent hits with Redeye, a hand-held, infrared guided, antiaircraft missile. His battalion commanders all confirmed this, without so much as a wink. Later, out on the range, I discovered the reason for the good scores. The little flying drones at which the men were shooting had been slowed down to 60 miles an hour. At speeds closer to that of an attacking aircraft, too many soldiers had missed the targets.

A lying officer is a demoralized officer. Four years ago at an American Air Force base, a group of majors and captains gave me a letter they had written anonymously to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. It reads:

> Well, I quit. I don't mind the duty or the hours. That's what I signed on for. I have watched my buddies roll up in fireballs. I understand. It comes with the territory. I can do it, but I won't. I'm too tired, not of the job, just the Air Force. Tired of the extremely poor leadership and motivational ability of our senior staffers and commanders. Our operational squadrons aren't worth a damn. They die wholesale every time the Aggressors deploy. [The Aggressors are a crack U.S. squadron that uses Russian tactics to train other squadrons.] Meanwhile you lie about the takeoff times so it isn't an operational or a maintenance late. . . . You lie about your operational capability because you are afraid to report you don't have the sorties to hack it. I listened to a three-star General look a roomful of us in the face and say that he "did not realize that pencil-whipping [fudging] records was done in the Air Force." . . . It's the party line, no issues, no controversy, yes sir, no sir, three bags full sir. . . .

I was reminded again of those Hamlet Evaluation Statistics that showed us winning in Vietnam.

WHEN I go on the lecture circuit I am frequently asked what I consider to be the greatest military strength possessed by America. My reply is always the same: the intelligence and aggressiveness of our people and the strength of our beliefs in our system of government. This is rarely seen as a satisfactory answer—particularly to those between 20 and 40. "We are asking you a serious question," one college student complained from the floor, "and you talk about fire in the belly."

The expected, acceptable answer, I have discovered, is that we are ahead in some technical area, which gives us the military advantage. Alas, these presumed superiorities—in precision weapons, in atomic weapons, in tanks, in fighters—are either nonexistent or not all that decisive. The Russians are not supermen, and they are behind us overall, but they aren't patsies either. The belief that weapons can be designed that will turn mediocre soldiers into victors is one of the products of the Great Divorce of the armed forces from the rest of society. It is a rationale for not supporting a draft: don't let my college graduate son serve. Give those poor unfortunates in the service some wonder weapon. It doesn't matter that they are too stupid to read maps. We will give them a bleeper in their helmet that tells them by satellite where they are. In the early days in Vietnam, people would explain that the helicopter was going to win the war for us. Good weapons are a vital part of defense. But good people in trained units using sound tactics come first.

ONE WOULD think that America, with its vast communications and computer industry, would be ahead here. The truth is that while we may have good weapons on the drawing board, the Soviets are ahead in the field—by five years, estimate two generals, one at NATO headquarters and one at a forward air base. The Russians have two mobile radio direction-finding units in each division and are about to go to four. We have none. The Russians have two mobile radio and radar jamming units with each division—updated versions of units that successfully bottled up the Israelis in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. We have none. The Russians have mobile listening stations operated by trained crews that can distinguish between our targets. Our equipment is not mobile, and a lot more of the operators understand Vietnamese than Russian. "I have no one in my headquarters who can tell a tank battalion headquarters from an artillery battery," a division intelligence officer tells me sadly.

The final expected answer to questions about the quality of our ground forces is that we do not really have to worry. It is said that our enormous superiority in tactical airpower, fighters, and fighter bombers that attack ground troops will win the land battle for us. Roughly one-quarter of the American defense budget does go to tactical airpower in any given year, and that excludes the helicopters. From Vietnam until President Reagan's shipbuilding program, tactical air was the largest single item in the military budget. (Shipbuilding is now first.) Our air forces are highly mobile, and the maneuvers that demonstrate our ability to move fighters rapidly to Europe appear efficient and effective. But because of the bitter interservice rivalry over the control of Marine aviation (exactly the

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rivalry that kept the Air Force chopper pilots out of the Iranian rescue mission), 40 percent of all the tactical air assets are assigned to the Navy and Marines. In a crisis, the Air Force, which commands NATO's airspace, would have no way to call up the Navy and Marine planes. Even if it could, the planes would not arrive in Europe in time for the crucial first two weeks of a European war. And even for the planes there on the scene and those that would get there in the first two weeks, important questions remain: in this world of precision weapons, how many of the gigantic bases will still be operating in Europe? And, most importantly, how will the aircraft perform when they get there?

HERE WE begin to see perhaps the greatest danger of our troubled defenses. Suppose in the event of a war in Europe that everything works according to our plans (which on the evidence is totally unlikely). After two days we and the rest of NATO have fought the Russians, East Germans, and Czechs to a standstill. On the third day the old tooth-to-tail problem will defeat us. Again looking at the Yom Kippur War, it seems certain that in this age of accurate weapons the losses will be horrendous. NATO war plans call for each U.S. division to fire 5,000 tons of ammunition on the first day, and 3,000 tons on each succeeding day. At these rates of fire, artillery gun tubes will wear out in one week. But U.S. forces do not have the skilled mechanics to replace the gun tubes. Nor do we have enough trucks and drivers to bring the ammunition forward. One of the officers responsible for solving this problem tells me he will be 500 rounds short for each gun in his division by the start of the third day. NATO studies show that American forces in Europe will have run out of antitank helicopter ammunition at the end of the second day.

As for tanks, if we lose them at merely the same rates as the Israelis did during the Yom Kippur War, by the third day we will need 1,500 new tanks. We do have some extra old tanks in warehouses. But these are on the wrong side of the Rhine, and we lack the tank transports and crews to move them forward. Not that it matters, since the Rhine bridges certainly will not be standing. Also, the radios for these replacement tanks are in another warehouse miles away. But never mind—the radios don't fit inside these tanks anyway. Learning from the Yom Kippur War, the Germans have greatly increased their forward, already-in-position supplies of tanks, ammunition, and men. We have not.

There is a bitter jest throughout NATO that American plans for the defense of Europe are based on flying imaginary troops in nonexistent planes into airbases already destroyed at the command of headquarters no longer in action. At present there is more truth than humor in the joke. The war-fighting ability of the U.S. troops in Europe, though improving, still has a long way to go. Some say that this doesn't matter—that NATO's conventional forces are merely there to be a tripwire that will trigger the use of nuclear weapons, first on the battlefield and, if that doesn't work, on Soviet territory. The threat of the tripwire, they say, deters the war from ever starting. They say that we could actually cut back our own and other NATO conventional forces and save money. But using conventional forces only as a tripwire greatly increases the probability of nuclear war.

If at the end of the three days the armies of the Warsaw Pact stand victorious on the English Channel, having taken few casualties and not having used nuclear weapons, they have won. We are unlikely to use nuclear weapons against them to dislodge them from the parts of Europe they hold. And if they ever thought, especially in a time of crisis, that they could win so much at so little risk, then they might well move. If, on the other hand, at the end of those same three days the Warsaw Pact armies are just twenty miles inside the inner German border, advancing at best slowly, while both sides take extensive losses, and the satellite countries, seeing no easy victory, seethe with unrest, that is a very different outlook. The risk of nuclear war is certainly great. But paradoxically so is the outlook for negotiation and peace. The stronger the tripwire, the longer we can avoid using nuclear weapons.

The United States now has roughly 6,000 nuclear weapons in Europe, stored in 176 different locations. Or that was the number in 1982 when I was last leaked the figure. It's roughly the same today. After endless interviews and conferences on and about nuclear weapon use, I believe that no one has really asked the hard questions about what these weapons will be used for.

AN EXAMPLE of such a hard question would be: If these weapons are primarily there for deterrence, could not many of them be placed on submarines or ships offshore? Particularly now, with precision-guided cruise missiles becoming reliable, nuclear weapons would be more secure at sea, and would still accomplish the same mission. This would free up some 30,000 men for conventional forces, enough for two armored or infantry divisions. It would also free many jet fighters from the nuclear mission, and these would greatly add to the ability of the Air Force to win a European battle. Another hard question: Where are we going to use these weapons? Should we announce in advance that we will never use them on West German but only on Warsaw Pact territory? Does that make nuclear warfare more likely or less? But these kinds of questions, often raised in public debate, are rarely debated in NATO or the Defense Department.

Sadly, the defense of Western Europe now rests on conventional forces that are lacking and on a nuclear threat that is becoming more difficult to believe. American strategy is not based on philosophy, or doctrine, or world outlook, but on the weakness of our conventional forces. After billions of dollars spent on defense and on NATO, we have ended up with the choice we sought to avoid all along, the choice between relying on an army that cannot win and starting a nuclear war that is not winnable. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Adventure and Adversity

"Don't you ever go to a picture for a *good time*?" The question recurs; and the real answer, of course, is: "Always—whether it's Bresson or Burt Reynolds." A lesser answer is that, much more often than not, pictures made only to entertain flub the job; and that sort of failure is more dismal than a failed serious film.

So I'm cheered to report an exception—another good "good time" film,

Romancing the Stone
(Twentieth Century-Fox)

The Stone Boy
(Twentieth Century-Fox)

following warm on the heels of *Splash*. *Romancing the Stone* was made from an original screenplay by Diane Thomas, whose film this fundamentally is. It deals with a young Manhattan woman who writes old-fashioned romance novels (a thriving trade in these supercool punk days). Through a series of wild incidents, the writer is yanked out from behind her electric typewriter, out of her apartment, away from her cat, and is plunked into a plot in the jungles of Colombia. Her true adventures make her fictions look true, and in the course of them, she hooks up with an American bird hunter, a sort of hip Papageno, who at first helps her reluctantly, then gets involved with her in (ho ho) more ways than one.

Parody is the aim, and the aim is held pretty steadily. The just-visible base of the parody is *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but *Romancing the Stone* operates by genre recognition more than by the specifics of one previous film. It's funny much of the time and exciting some of the time because Diane Thomas has invention and the wit to see that, just by leaning a bit, an adventure story can become amusing to us without becoming less perilous for the characters. Sheer stone walls get scaled; jeeps leap streams; savage machine-gun fire rakes hero and heroine without ever touching them; and (says Thomas seemingly) what else is new? I laughed quite a lot at this film but never in ridicule, as I did at the recent *Against All Odds*, which was not meant to be ludicrous but was.

Romancing the Stone, fluent as its script is, could easily have faltered on the way from page to screen. It doesn't. The director, Robert Zemeckis, aided by deft editors, keeps the ball bouncing. His well-cast cast takes the whole thing utterly seriously, even in the comic roles, which is essential. The young woman is played by Kathleen Turner, and except for a slight addiction to grinning she has appeal. The rough-and-ready hero is Michael Douglas, who produced the film, and who zips along with one more rerun of the *It Happened One Night* situation—the brusque male who takes on the troubles of a harassed female for a price, then takes on more than he bargained for. Among the others Danny De Vito, though short, stands out, as an inept crook.

All hands, by understanding the silliness of adventure stories without attacking our affection for them, serve up a good time.

The Stone Boy is a serious picture that fails. It received its best compliment before it began: Robert Duvall agreed to appear in it. Duvall, whose role is not the center, is absolutely sound, but he doesn't have a chance to save this picture, which, even in a larger role, he couldn't have done.

This film, too, as clearly as *Romancing the Stone*, starts and ends with its screenplay. It, too, is an original—by Gina Berriault, a respected writer of fiction. This is her first screenplay, and it shows small gift for the medium. The story is fuzzily focused; it splatters around a tension that is none too well set up and that is resolved by the author, not by the characters. And, like other honestly intentioned playwrights and screenwriters who are insecure in their craft, Berriault falls into falseness and cliché.

A twelve-year-old Montana farm boy accidentally kills his older brother with a gun that the pair have taken with them, just for a shot at some ducks, when they go out to pick peas. After the shot, the stunned boy picks a pail of peas, then goes back to the house and reports the death. The action of the film is the "thawing" of the boy from shock into a realization that he is not guilty and not unloved, an action accompanied by the eventual forgiveness of his father. The story has an emotional reach that remains unreached. Another plot strand of some size—an uncle's philandering that results in the end of his marriage—is tied very thinly to the center. The boy's trip to Reno to see his aunt is not much less incredible than anything in *Romancing the Stone*, and his breakdown on the bosom of a young mother whom he meets on the return trip is a strained adduction of sensitivity—Berriault's, not the boy's.

Jason Presson, who plays the boy, is not affecting. Obviously the blame can't be put on young Presson but on those who cast and directed him; still the result is a huge insuperable flaw at the

FILMS WORTH SEEING

L'Argent. Robert Bresson in purest form, though with a lesser script. An adolescent's peccadillo leads to catastrophe, and in this avalanche Bresson divines the divine. (Reviewed 4/16/84)

Biquefarre. In 1947 there was *Farrebique*, Georges Rouquier's quasi documentary about French farmers. Now he has made a sequel, almost as fine. (4/23/84)

Seeing Red. Documentary about surviving American Communists who joined in the 1930s. Moving in its accounts of initial motives, less convincing about subsequent actions. (4/2/84)

Sugar Cane Alley. Martinique, 1930. An eleven-year-old black boy begins his struggle upward out of poverty through education. Warm, vivid first film by Euzhan Palcy, a young black Martinique woman. (4/30/84)

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film's core. Duvall, as his father, does nothing we haven't seen him do before. (Also, this farmer, supposedly hard-working, seems to have considerable time on his hands for wandering around.) Glenn Close, his wife, is less offensive than she was in *The Big Chill* but not much more effective. She has some skill, but it is in fabrication, not in conviction. As a worldly wise grandpa right off the homespun shelf, Wilford Brimley continues to build a sunset career. (He was Duvall's manager in *Tender Mercies*.)

Three defects in its making seal the fate of *The Stone Boy*. The cinematography by Juan Ruiz-Anchia is unremittingly gorgeous. Mother Nature slaps us in the face with wondrous beauty every couple of minutes, in shots that are crammed with self-admiration. There's a wide difference, not a fine line, between nature shots that amplify what people have already made us feel (as in *The Grey Fox*) and nature shots used to provide what the people have failed to make us feel—panorama substituted for drama.

Christopher Cain, whose first film this is, is solely responsible for the other two troubles. He is angle-crazy. Every shot can't and shouldn't correspond to the vision of another person, but Cain's shots from rooftops do nothing but draw attention to themselves. And his pacing relies very heavily on rural stoicism, long pauses between the utterances of taciturn folk. A supposedly pregnant pause that turns out to be sterile is just a gap. Pregnancy in pauses is produced by what precedes and follows: otherwise, they are only impastings, like the gorgeous nature shots.

A few moments, like the uncle's seduction of a girl in his car, hint at possibility in Cain. But his first film does not teem with promise.

Correction. Through misreading of a note, I said in my review of *The Good Fight* (4/23) that Bill Bailey was not a member of the Lincoln Brigade. I was wrong. Apologies.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Show and Tell

To see the revival of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (Broadhurst) back to back with David Mamet's new play *Glengarry Glen Ross* (John Golden) is a compelling and enlightening experience—the coupling of these two events is like a cultural broadcast of what is past and passing and to come. Mamet follows Miller in making salesmen the metaphorical victims of a ruthless, venal, and corrupt system, but the two approaches, divided by a gulf of thirty-five years, reflect significant differences in politics and practice, telling us more about the changing nature of American drama (and society) than a dozen theater histories.

Death of a Salesman
by Arthur Miller

Glengarry Glen Ross
by David Mamet

Mamet has unwittingly accentuated a long-criticized flaw in Miller's conception, and I don't mean Willy Loman's failure to achieve tragic stature. It's hard to imagine anybody, including the author, still prepared to anoint this poignant Brooklyn drummer as the lower-middle-class equivalent of Oedipus. No, the years have proved *Death of a Salesman* valid not as a new democratic "tragedy of the common man," but as a social realist melodrama with roots in the Yiddish Theater of Jacob Adler (estranged father and son reconciled in an emotional embrace) and the Group Theater of Clifford Odets (rebellious young man abandons his oppressive home for a place where life is not printed on dollar bills). Miller's stage technique seems to depart somewhat from linear realism when investigating Willy's memories, but these episodes are more akin to movie flashbacks than interior journeys since—like the climactic encounter with Biff in a Boston hotel room—they usually recapitulate actual events in Willy's past life.

No, the flaw I am referring to is Mill-

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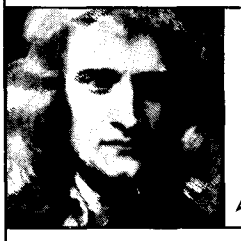

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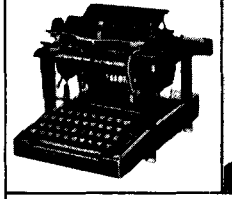

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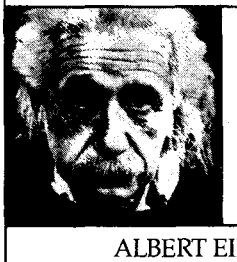
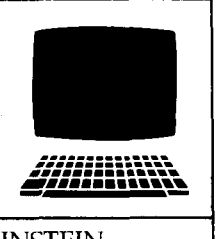

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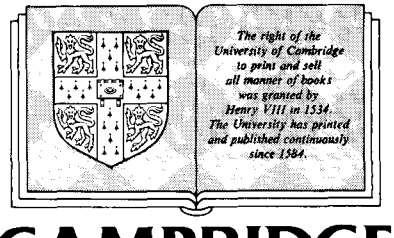
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er's failure to tell us what Willy Loman sells. This no longer sounds like a quibble after *Glengarry Glen Ross*, which fashions powerful epiphanies precisely out of dramatizing what the salesmen sell (real estate), and, more importantly, how they sell it. Mamet's theme is subtly assimilated within accumulated details of action and character; for Miller, these elements are often secondary to pontifications and pronouncements ("Nobody dast blame this man," "He's only a little boat looking for a harbor," "Attention must finally be paid to such a person," etc.). It is the difference between a writer with the qualities of a dramatic poet and one who tends to use the theater for oracular rhetoric. It marks a contrast between an artist who *shows*—who understands the effectiveness of understatement, who knows how a totally honest realism can transcend itself, that the truth is concrete—and one who *tells*—who manipulates his material for the sake of emotional effects, sententious flourishes, and social generalizations.

STILL, *Salesman* remains Miller's most potent play, for all its well-rehearsed faults, and I am glad it's being revived if only to see the author reinstated in the fickle affections of his countrymen. Under Michael Rudman's respectful, deliberate direction, the current production is an honorable one, though the evening has its longueurs and the central character is miscast. Dustin Hoffman's rasping gravelly delivery features a strong Brooklyn accent in puzzling contrast to his brother Ben's orotund Players Club diction, and he waddles across the stage like a graying, pleated, unsteady penguin looking for his nest. Hoffman's effort is gallant, but he is playing a role for which he lacks sufficient histrionic weight; expending energies in detailed impersonation of late middle age, he often gives a studied, technical, curiously cold performance. John Malkovich as Biff, in a subtle, shrewd display of naturalistic underplaying, by turns soft-spoken and menacing, immediately identifies himself as the media heir to Brando and Pacino. But in witnessing the actor's instant leap to stardom I sometimes stopped concentrating on the character, as if I were reading a feature follow-up rather than watching a performance. Kate Reid does what she can with the impossible role of Linda Loman—patience darning socks on a monument, awaiting manumission by the woman's movement—and Stephen Lang's Happy, David Huddleston's Charley, Ben Edward's lyrical tenement set, and Alex North's thirty-five-year-old flute music all contribute to warm feelings of nostalgia, if not of déjà vu.

AH, BUT Mamet, bless him, has written a play without a single soft spot, which once again allows you to believe that American playwriting, at its best, can hold its place with the finest in the world. Mamet's ear is uncanny. Nobody today has a more flawless gift for reproducing overheard colloquial speech. But Paddy Chayefsky had this too (so, indeed, does a tape recorder); what distinguishes Mamet's dialogue is the purpose to which it is put. Without a single tendentious line, without any polemical intention, without a trace of pity or sentiment, Mamet has launched an assault on the American way of making a living which is at the same time savage and compassionate, powerful and implicit, radical and stoical.

The first act of *Glengarry Glen Ross* consists of three short scenes in a seedy Chinese restaurant. The first of these—between the salesman, Shelley Levine, and the office manager, John Williamson—is materially similar to, yet significantly different from, the vaguely agitprop climactic scene in Miller's play where Willy gets fired by his boss, Howard. Levine is aging, flagging, on his way out. What he needs from the bloodless Williamson is access to the prime leads so he can recover his past affluence and self-esteem. Williamson, his face cold with distaste, agrees to give him the leads providing Levine return 20 percent of his commission and $50 a lead, with $100 down. Levine accepts the deal but doesn't have the down payment. In a similar condition of helplessness, Willy Loman moaned "You can't eat an orange and throw the peel away"; Levine responds by pouring a flood of contemptuous invective on the head of his hated tormentor.

The second scene features another orange refusing the rubbish heap. Dave Moss, a bald dynamo, is discussing with another salesman, George Aaronow, the possibility of stealing the leads and selling them to a competitor—"Someone should rob the office . . . trash the joint, it looks like robbery." George half-listens until he realizes that Dave expects him to do the job. He is implicated now, an accessory before the fact. When George asks why he is doing this to him, Dave answers: "It's none of your fucking business," and then "Because you listened." In the third scene, the salesman Richard Roma lines up a potential mark, James Lingk, by engaging him in sexual small talk, then hauls out a brochure for Glengarry Highlands, a tract of land in Florida. This apparently insignificant action ends the act.

Written like obscene vaudeville riffs, these small Mamet mosaics become the basis for a large, ambitious narrative in which the pursuit of the leads assumes the magnitude of a quest for the Holy Grail. The second act setting is the real estate office. It has been thoroughly trashed; the leads have been stolen; a police detective is questioning the suspect salesmen. Both Levine and Roma have closed big deals, and they are exultant. But before the day is over, both men will lose their advantage. Levine's customers prove to be incorrigible eccentrics who sign worthless checks. And Roma's mark, Lingk, has come to cancel the sale by order of his wife who controls the checking account. Through a masquerade so inventive it almost establishes Roma as a Zen master in the art of conmanship, he manages to stall Lingk long enough to make cancellation impossible—only to have his con queered by the malignant Williamson. In the mayhem that follows, the true thief is exposed and apprehended (Mamet's only implausible plot twist), while Williamson regains his dominance over the beleaguered salesmen.

THOSE SALESMEN, however, for all their ruthlessness and competitiveness, have meanwhile managed to assume a kind of unexpected camaraderie, largely in opposition to such "fucking white bread" as Williamson. Except for him, Roma tells us, "Everyone in this office lives on his wits." But the race is becoming extinct. "It's not a world of men," reflects Shelley, "it's a world of bureaucrats, clock watchers, office holders—we're a dying breed." Dying they may be, but for Mamet this sleazy, smarmy race of losers still has a volatile energy, even an elegiac aura of heroism. The powerful tensions he has uncovered between the ethnic underclass and the WASP functionaries who administer its employment opportunities pick the scabs off a lot of ancient half-healed wounds.

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The production comes from the Goodman Theater in Chicago and it is excellent. Gregory Mosher, Goodman's artistic director, has capitalized on his association with Mamet to create a forward momentum which is relentless, while deepening each of the performances. Robert Prosky as Levine maintains a manly resolve and courage in the midst of squeezed gray defeat; Joe Mantegna's Roma, with his patent leather hair, gold cufflinks, and pinkie ring, embodies the splendid vulgarity of a merchant of manipulation; James Tolkan is wired and taut as Moss; Mike Nussbaum plays Aaronow like a forlorn beagle, his sad eyelids drooping over his perpetually woeful countenance; and J. T. Walsh is steely as the cold, handsome bureaucrat, Williamson, whose only physical defect is a spreading bureaucrat's bottom. Michael Merritt's sets are brilliantly rendered disaster areas, especially the cinder block office, and Nan Cibula's costumes provide an authentic polyester look for men with a weakness for terrible clothes.

Like *American Buffalo*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* is to my mind a genuine Mamet masterpiece, a play so precise in its realism that it transcends itself and takes on reverberant ethical meanings. It is biting, pungent, harrowing, and funny, showing life stripped of all idealistic pretenses and liberal pieties—a jungle populated with beasts of prey who nevertheless possess the single redeeming quality of friendship. It is a play that returns tragic joy to the theater—the kind of understanding O'Neill gave us in his last plays, facing painful truths with courage and thereby leavening profound pessimism with profound exhilaration. It is a play that shares the secret implicit in all fine works of dramatic art—that such truths are much more potent shown than told.

WORLD OF HIS FATHERS

Jinnah of Pakistan
by Stanley Wolpert

(Oxford University Press, 421 pp., $24.95)

Beware the fury of a rejected *assimilé*! Some of the most intense sectarian movements in politics have been led by men who had first aimed to join the universal current, only to be swept back to a more sheltered world of kinsmen. The modern world had promised to erase old lines and primordial distinctions, but time and again, the "emancipated" have returned bruised and rejected into the bosom of old ways. Never mind if the emancipated have their fling with socialist or enlightenment politics, or with secular nationalism, or with the more open ways of a cosmopolitan culture. Leave it to the modern world: at the moment when the emancipated have begun to believe that they could walk undetected into a world of others, when they have finally committed the world of their ancestors to a hazy memory, hid it under new ideas, and politics and attire and mannerisms, a door would be slammed in their faces. And the scramble would begin for a frenzied return to old forms of identity. In Kafka's words, it is the present that forces men back into their past.

It was M. A. Jinnah, Esquire, later Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), barrister at law, a drinker, a firm believer in "British law and Indian nationalism," a man who married outside the faith and tried, in the 1930s, to get himself elected to the British Parliament and forget all about Hindus and Muslims—it was he who eventually led his people to the "promised land" of Pakistan. Along the way the Saville Row suits were traded for Punjabi attire, the anglicized name was dropped for his old Muslim one. But the Punjabi attire came in 1937 when Jinnah was more than 60 years of age. And it was only in the 1940s when Mohammad Ali Jinnah, now *Quaid-i-Azam* (Great Leader) of his people, said that it was the Muslim state of Pakistan that he was after.

"Yes," said Jinnah, "I am Karachi-born, and it was on the sands of Karachi that I played marbles in my boyhood. I was schooled at Karachi." Those words were spoken in Karachi in 1947 after the partition of India had become a fact. It was an old man's consolation. Jinnah was indeed born in Karachi, but it was in Bombay where he made his mark and his home for nearly half a century. Bombay was his choice and his romance. A "vivacious" and "cosmopolitan" aunt of his had taken him there as an impressionable child of 11. Six months later, the young boy returned to Karachi because his mother missed him and wanted him back. After he finished his legal training in London, he returned to Bombay to stay. There he married a flamboyant Parsi woman a quarter-century his junior. He played at secular politics; he was called ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity. The return to Karachi, where he died a year after the establishment of Pakistan, was a fitting end. The cosmopolitan world of his aunt had been denied Jinnah. He would return to a more limited world.

So far Jinnah has been a brooding and inaccessible figure. He has been known mainly as a sinister rival to the saintly Gandhi, seen through the world that Gandhi, such a masterful P.R. man, set up for us. We have ac-

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cepted Gandhi's depiction of himself as a universal man, a man above intrigues and deals. Gandhi gave the travelers and fawning biographers who came to India what they wanted. The visitors walked with *Bapu*, they stayed at his Ashram, they were told of nature cures. The chatty endearing man, at once so exotic and so much a product of the liberal empire, was a show all his own. As for Jinnah, we have seen him with his limitations and fears, unable to embrace a message of communal peace and brotherhood.

Forbidding Jinnah, or Plain Mr. Jinnah, as he himself said in an obvious put-down of Gandhi's title of Mahatma or Great Soul. He received his visitors, by appointment, in a mansion of marble with terraces overlooking the sea at Bombay. No wonder the difference. Gandhi and the younger Jawaharlal Nehru, son of Motilal Nehru, another of Jinnah's rivals, stood to inherit the British Raj. The younger Nehru was a Kashmiri Brahman; he stood on solid ground. As for Gandhi, he was a *bania* (of the merchant class); he had nothing to worry about. *Banias* were on the make. The new world belonged to them. Forbidding Jinnah, however, needed the privacy and the stiff upper lip.

JINNAH, c. 1927, COURTESY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ISLAMABAD

Stanley Wolpert, a leading historian of South Asia at U.C.L.A., has written the first major biography of Jinnah. He has drawn on vast archival sources in Pakistan and England to put together, with care and detail, the life and times of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. There is no gimmick or crutch here, no search for one great simple explanation or a psycho-historical puzzle. This is, rather, a superbly documented tale, a year-by-year account of a sensitive and difficult man of double marginality—Jinnah was a *Shiite* Muslim—and his search for a political answer to an acute personal and cultural predicament. Wolpert has done what biography, at its best, should do: he has told the story of a complex and tormented man, and related his torments and choices to the insoluble dilemma which he inherited—to the predominance of men who slammed doors in his face while pretending to be able to take in all other men as brothers and compatriots. By the time Wolpert takes you to Karachi, on Jinnah's flight from Delhi to his new home and his new state, you are left with a new appreciation of the man: no love, and, for sure, no pity—these were sentiments that Jinnah did without—but certainly a measure of grudging respect.

Jinnah was heir to an impossible legacy. He and his generation of Indian Muslims were born after the Mogul (Islamic) dominion had been broken. Of the Mogul world there remained the relics, the monuments and the memories—memories inviting nostalgia among the Muslims and the desire for revenge among the Hindus. When the Mogul court held sway it was a complex and subtle affair that put the Emperor and his court at the center of society. The Mogul ideal was expressed in a sixteenth-century saying: "The world, as a bride, betrothes herself to the King." A Persianized elite culture—with its cuisine and its art and architecture, with the ways of its landlords and officials—clustered around the Emperor and his court. The elite took in Hindus and Muslims. As David Lelyveld put it in *Aligarh's First Generation*, his important study of the Muslim generation that preceded Jinnah's, "India was ruled by Muslims but the 'Muslims' did not rule India."

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, this elite culture faced the double-assault of Great Britain and Hindu revivalism. In the first half of the century, Persian had given way to the vernacular Urdu. In the years after that there were the pressures of Great Britain and its language and culture. There was also the growing power of Hindu merchants who took an easier leap into the bourgeois age and in no time raised the banner of the Hindi language and the Nagri script. With that radical change came a reinterpretation of the past. Muslims now saw themselves as the sole rulers of Mogul times. They exaggerated how much of the past belonged to them. And the Hindus, too, forgot that the Mogul Empire had been a loose affair, in many ways a shell for a vast and diverse society.

Born to a Shiite merchant family, son of a trader involved in import and export activities, Jinnah was not an inheritor, at least not directly, of the tales of splendor and decay of Mogul India. As Wolpert tells it, when a group of "thirty-five Muslims of noble birth, wealth, and power from every province of British India and several princely states" turned up at the Viceroy's palace in Simla on October 1, 1906, to make the case for Muslim India against an "unsympathetic majority" and to launch the Muslim League, young Jinnah was a member in good standing of

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the Indian National Congress. He was the kind of man who was introduced at important occasions by members of the Congress—you know the story and the scene: "Here is Mr. Jinnah, M.A. Jinnah; unlike most Muslims he is as keen an Indian nationalist as the rest of us." The words are almost the exact words of Motilal Nehru, father of Jawaharlal. It was a matter of self-confidence, said Jinnah to his Muslim compatriots in 1916. Don't be "scared away," he told them. There are seventy million of you. Like your "Hindu fellow-countrymen," you can share in the making of the young India.

The same Jinnah was to put forth the case for India's partition with almost neurotic purity. Note the totalism in the older Jinnah on India's Muslims:

> By all canons of international law, we are a nation. We are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions.

The belief in a distinct Muslim nation came a quarter-century after Jinnah had spoken of Muslim self-confidence. The name of Pakistan had been the creation of a frenzied pamphleteer working in Cambridge in 1932, a Punjabi by the name of Rahmat Ali. At first, the conservative, legally minded Jinnah would have nothing to do with Rahmat Ali or his label. That it fell to Jinnah to appropriate Rahmat Ali's label and to carry the torch of the aristocratic Urdu-speaking elite of Upper India is a testimony to the ironic meandering ways of the modern world.

The marginal Jinnah had started out with British law and Indian nationalism. He needed both. In the interwar period, and steadily in the few years to come, he lived to see both pillars of support denied him. In a way, it seemed to Jinnah that he had lost both to Gandhi. Take the first public encounter between Jinnah and Gandhi in 1915. Gandhi had returned to India after two decades in South Africa; he was already a celebrity in his native land. Jinnah, of Bombay, was then chairman of the Gujarat Society (Gurjar Sabha). He gave a garden party to welcome Gandhi, the celebrated man of Gujarat. Gandhi stood up to thank Jinnah for his welcome and to say how glad he was "to find a Mohammedan not only belonging to his own region's Sabha, but chairing it." Odd choice for a compliment, notes Wolpert. What was the shrewd Gandhi doing? Gandhi had returned from a long absence; Jinnah had been toiling in Bombay as a lawyer and politician since 1896. Gandhi set the record straight. A son of Gujarat, a Hindu, had returned to lead his people.

In no time Gandhi, the brilliant organizer, took politics to the masses and villages. Nothing less than complete independence from Britain was Gandhi's platform. This was not a game that Jinnah could or would play. Civil disobedience and marches, Jinnah complained, "struck the imagination mostly of the inexperienced youth and the ignorant and the illiterate": the marginal man's fear of popular passions and participation.

Before he opted for partition, Jinnah wanted dominion status for India within the commonwealth. But he wanted it negotiated by the "right men"; he wanted "guarantees" for the minorities. This was not the kind of position to withstand the mass politics launched by Gandhi in the interwar period. India had changed in ways that Jinnah, an old-fashioned man, found hard to comprehend.

The British Empire, too, was no long-

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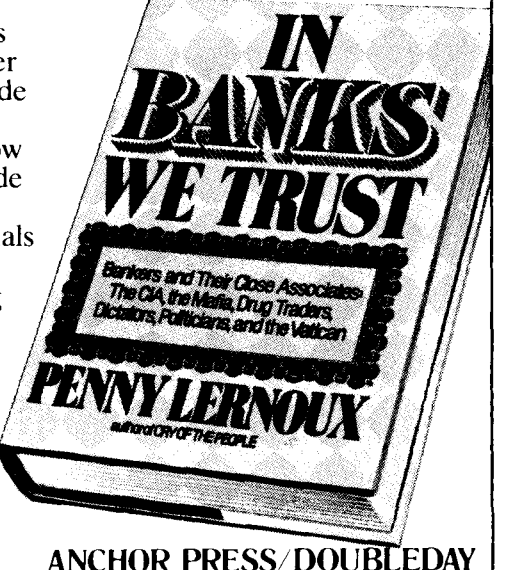
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er its old self. It could not offer the kind of guarantees Jinnah wanted. It was an empire on the run. Its days were numbered. It improvised; it appeased Gandhi when Jinnah would have wanted a firm display of British power. It resorted to intermittent displays of brittle power that embarrassed men like Jinnah who grew up with a belief in British "justice and fair play."

JINNAH, WHO had given up on India to practice law in London for a few years in the 1930s, was no match for Gandhi in his understanding of the empire. Gandhi took on the British Empire in a more natural way. He knew its limits of tolerance, its mixture of racial arrogance and enlightenment. He understood what publicity could do, and he knew that the empire could be cornered, shamed, charmed, and entertained. Gandhi's case against the Raj was clear. The Raj was doomed; it would be fought within the limits of the law; it would be defeated by a masterful manipulation of the British self-image. Viceroys would be fought one day and embraced the next. The Raj would be resisted, but there would be Gandhian "love" for the occupier. And beyond the struggle for independence, Gandhi promised an India that the British could relate to and live with.

Jinnah's case was of a different nature altogether. It was a reminder to the colonial power that his own community had accepted British authority, and for the most part stayed away from the new nationalist movement. His appeal was to a more conservative British sensibility that was itself in retreat at home. The guarantees Jinnah wanted could not be provided. Partition was about the only thing a dying empire could offer to a community that the empire had first broken and then protected as the world was beginning to change. It was a community that needed British patronage and help precisely because the British-induced changes that brought about a more bourgeois India left the Muslims of India in a precarious, untenable position.

Men like Jinnah who could not make their peace with their place in the new scheme of things led their people to a newly constituted polity. What they left behind, they insisted, was not India, but Hindustan. They were partly right and partly wrong in the label they applied to the country they left behind. It was Hindustan—and a little more. But they needed the consolation to cover up the trauma of separation.

As a young man in his late teens in London, Mohammad Ali Jinnah ached to be a Shakespearean actor. He wanted a stage career and very much wanted to play the role of Romeo. He sought his family's permission. The predictable answer then came from his father, "Do not be a traitor to the family." No disgrace please, and no deeds of shame. Men are men and they should opt for the careers of men. A stage career was not to be. But Jinnah pulled off a masterful act of his own. He stood there in 1947, a dying old man ravaged by tuberculosis and cancer of the lungs, and passed off the story of hurt and rejection that underlay the creation of Pakistan as a tale of triumph and vindication.

FOUAD AJAMI

Fouad Ajami, author of *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought & Practice Since 1968* (Cambridge University Press), is on leave as Director of Middle East Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

THE GREY YEARS GATHER

Letters of Henry James: Volume IV (1895-1916) edited by Leon Edel

(Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 864 pp., $30)

The finest letters in this final volume—letters to Shaw, Wells, Henry Adams, Edith Wharton, and several to less celebrated members of the Master's narrowing circle—have been printed elsewhere by Professor Edel, our invaluable, inveterate source whom we long to question as to the reasons for his selection. Why, when all of Conrad's, all of Lawrence's, all of Shaw's, and even, God help us, all of Addington Symonds's, letters are to be published by the appropriate university presses—why has it been determined that those of the greatest Victorian, the greatest Edwardian, the greatest Georgian of them all should be so mysteriously, so arbitrarily "winnowed," as if his chaff were not more seminal than any other's wheat?

What is new here is the context in which the letters so beautifully appear, as James liked to say: the architectural regress in which we may place the grand old man by his hundreds of last grand letters ("chosen from many thousands"). Since this is the last volume, I must loiter over its predecessors a little in order to take proper measure of what we are offered here. In the first volume, James's letters from infancy to the age of 32 give us the best example I know of Keats's famous adjuration: "That which is creative must create itself." Apparently James set about doing so by distinctly detaching himself from New York and Cambridge, from Henry James Sr. and from William, not to mention from his mother and Alice and Aunt Kate; and by explicitly attaching himself to a world of evidence which simply did not exist where he had been deposited to find it:

> It would seem that in our great unendowed, unfurnished, unentertained and unentertaining continent, where we all sit sniffing, as it were, the very earth of our foundations, we ought to have leisure to turn out something handsome from the very heart of simple human nature. But after I have been at home a couple of months I will tell you what I think. Meanwhile I aspire to linger on here in Italy and make the most of it—even in poor little overshadowed Florence and in a society limited to waiters and washerwomen.

The tone is a telling one, at least in this first volume (which sees him through *Roderick Hudson*): the immense solitude, if it is not loneliness, of James's untried years is significantly different from the apparently peopled wastes of the tried ones. In letter after letter the youthful exile is quite frank about his disconnection, his alienation, his outlandishness. But it was worth it, even at the price of such severance as the young man's letters pay so handsomely, to obtain for

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the imagination its tower, its power, its—one may say—dower rights:

> What's the use of writing at all unless imaginatively? Unless one's vision can lend something to a thing, there's small reason in proceeding to proclaim one has seen it. Mere *looking* everyone can do for himself.

THE EARLY letters, then, are the history of a second birth, the articulation of a kind of seeing (vision rather than looking) that none of us can do for ourself—the seeing which was to constitute the forty years of verbal splendor to come; and of course by "verbal splendor" I mean every other kind—plastic, dramatic, comic, prophetic, as given out in the most extravagant linguistic endowment ever enjoyed by an American artist. The lesson of this volume, meanwhile, is all in that enjoyment. Whether James met a friend on the street, wrote a letter to that friend, wrote a note to himself, or a book, he was all there—he was there as the Maker, as he would have said. What else was there for him to be? As Quentin Anderson (who, with Richard Poirier, is his best American critic) has ventured, "it always had to be a love of the world in which things were shaped by the mouth—anything that departed from this would bear a lesser, or an attenuated, emotional value." In this early volume, whether in the merest accounting to his father for financial disbursements and luxuries or in the most "worked up" account of a visit to George Eliot, there is enjoyment of the gift, delighted trust in the letter; there is belief in writing not as an excruciating task or, as Wilde accused, a painful duty, but as connective tissue, enchanted process, the cartilage of pleasure.

Volume II of the letters was selected, Professor Edel again ominously reports, "from great masses of correspondence." It covers (if it does not cover up) that eight-year period during which the author of *Roderick Hudson* became the author of *The Portrait of a Lady*, and during which the "restless analyst" of so many national idiosyncrasies declared he expected to live in London "for the rest of my natural life. . . . The only important things that can happen to me are to die and to marry, and as yet I do neither. I shall in any case do the former first." These early middle letters are chiefly letters back to the Cambridge family, outpost-dispatches from the first "earner" among the five James children. There are surprisingly few to the very notables and neighbors among whom James so notoriously dined out and upon whom he so spaciously expatiates to his relatives. There is a mystery here, for how could the man who had dined out every night in London for months on end have become within five years an invisible citizen of the republic of the imagination for which he forsook even London?

> English life is one large conspiracy to make one drink tea. In truth, I am living here too long to be an observer—I am losing my sense of peculiarities and differences—I am sinking into dull British acceptance and conformity.

Forsaking is the characteristic movement here, the clue. Forsaking America for Europe, forsaking Paris for London, forsaking a dithering society for creative solitude: "In truth everyone, in life, is incomplete, and it is in the work of art that in reproducing them one feels the desire to fill them out, to justify them, as it were." We recognize that this life as recorded in the letters—and by "this life" I mean, of course, the work it produced too—is one of enormous repudiations, negations, renunciations, and, as I have called them, forsakings. The vision of Something Better must appeal to something lost, forfeited, rejected, or violated. Renunciation is the power, the morality of James's very prose, and it never falls off, whatever may fall from the negator:

> Nothing is my *last word* about anything—I am interminably analytic—and with the blessing of heaven I shall live to make all sorts of representations of all sorts of things. . . . New opportunities and ever so much of life, in a word, will remain. Try not to be ill—that is all, for in that there is a failure.

This is the end of Volume II of the letters—this and the *Portrait*. With a curious rightness, though, the last word falls to Leon Edel, who notes that "HJ wrote 'future' but fairly obviously meant 'failure.' " Fairly obviously—yet I suspect that such a slip of the pen, if that is what it is, dramatizes James's awareness of the constant relations of failure and future, his own consciousness that only by saying "no" could he go on saying. Had he not written to Howells, even before Isabel Archer Osmond renounced her future and returned to her extraordinary failure in Rome, "I suspect it is the tragedies in life that arrest my attention more than the other things and say more to my imagination"?

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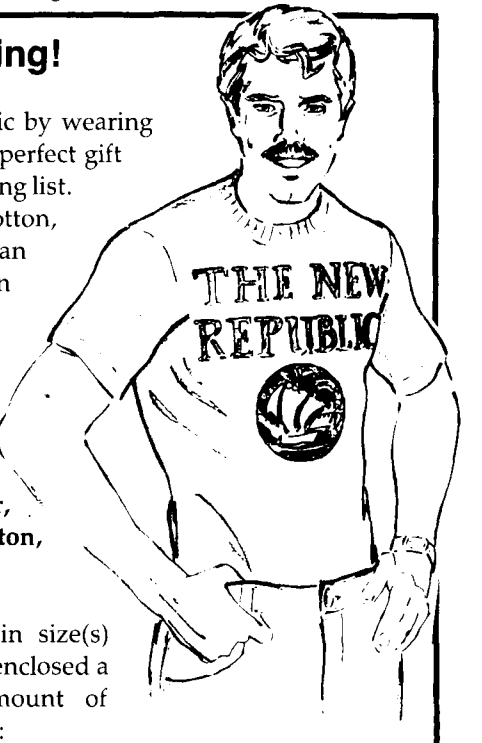

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Once we have read the first two volumes of James's letters, we have already traversed a filtered thousand pages of sumptuous *trouvailles* of expression which are so incessant as to transcend mere finding, mere invention. They pass into that continuity of utterance that sustains and perhaps justifies the notion of literature itself, certainly the literature of the man whose last word was—in the sense that nothing is always the search for something—"nothing."

The next twelve years of James's letters, in Volume III, connect the death of a benighted younger brother to the death of a beloved only sister, the death of the cherished Turgenev to the death of the charming Stevenson. In terms of James's own work, they leap from the serialization of the sensational *Bostonians* (omitted from the collected works) to the collapse (sensational, too, in its own way) of James's dramatic designs upon theatrical success. Already the intimations of "public" failure are being pursued—and postponed—by a kind of desperate bravado; in 1890, James writes to his wondering brother William:

> I have no illusions of any kind about the MUSE. One must go one's way and know what one's about and have a general plan and a private religion—in short have made up one's mind as to *ce qui en est* with a public the draggling after which simply leads one to the gutter. One has always a "public" enough if one has an audible vibration—even if it should only come from one's self. I shall never make my fortune, nor anything like it, but I know what I shall do, and it won't be bad.

We hear in this a resonance, a native strain that bears us from Melville's *isolato* to Dickinson's "suffice us for a crowd—ourself!" It is a heroism which is certainly warranted, and the prophecies which accompany the strenuous stand are warranted too: "Very likely," he writes to Howells, "some day all my buried prose will kick off its various tombstones at once."

That day has come. All of James's work is in print, even in reprint, except perhaps the plays, though of course Professor Edel has been at hand with them as well. It is an astonishing reversal—astonishing to those of us who remember how hard it was, in 1950, to come by a copy of, say, *The Golden Bowl*. To the Bachelor of Bolton Street ("I shall never marry—I am both happy enough and miserable enough as it is, and don't wish to add to either side of the account"), it would evidently not have come as a surprise. "*La vie forcément ecrivassière*" that he led by 1895 had its stoical resolutions, and its resignations as well. Yet James seems to have prepared for what was to come with a wisdom not generally allowed him by his biographers. (I cannot concur with Edel's grim analysis of Henry's life-and-death struggle with William, and it seems to me his ability to take Alice's subsidence is exceptional in fraternal penetration, if I may use such an expression without too much of an overtone.) The undertone of these years is, of course, the novelist's:

> We don't know what people might give us that they don't—the only thing is to take them on what they do and to allow them absolutely and utterly their conditions. This alone, for the taster, secures freedom of enjoyment.

Whereupon we open Volume IV, an enormous tome of over eight hundred pages, and find James at 52 confronting the last twenty years of his life with high ardor ("Of course for myself I live, live intensely and am fed by life, and my value, whatever it be, is in my own kind of expression of that") and with extreme awareness of his compromised health ("I am cut down to the barest inevitabilities, and occupied really more than in any other way now in simply saving my life . . . living every hour and at every minute on my guard"). The enormous labor of elaborating (and this after writing *The Ambassadors*, *The Wings of the Dove*, and *The Golden Bowl* within a five year period!) his monument, the New York Edition with its extraordinary prefaces, meets with the kind of silence which indeed weighs down the stoutest heart: "one writes for one's self alone—one has accepted, once for all—the worst," James writes to Whistler early in this volume, as he writes to Gosse late: "I remain, at my age, and after my long career, utterly, unsurmountably, unsaleable."

Yet this is not the disheartening, or even the heartbreaking thing it might seem. Alongside the many wonderful assertions of the values of art, of consciousness, of form and its responsibilities—assertions so frequently quoted that I shall resist all temptations to extract that great apologia for the artist's life which these letters make so available, so inevitable—is a kind of stubbornness, a toughness of fiber which evidently shifts the drama elsewhere, as when he writes to his brother:

> Let me say, dear William, that I shall greatly be humiliated if you *do* like *The Golden Bowl* and thereby lump it, in your affection, with things of the current age that I have heard you express admiration for and that I would sooner descend to a dishonoured grave than have written.

No, the glory and the grief of this final volume is not in the acknowledged

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deadlock between the artist and his audience. Nor is it even in the inevitable losses of the old man's toys: "the grey years gather, the arid spaces lengthen, damn them—or at any rate don't shorten, what doesn't come doesn't, and what goes *does*." For this sort of asseveration is easily countered by an almost gleeful sense of the fitness of things:

> The young, on the whole, make me pretty sad—the old themselves don't. But the *pretension* to youth is a thing that makes me saddest and oldest of all; the *acceptance* of the fact that I'm all the while growing older on the other hand decidedly rejuvenates me. . . .

Nor is it the incidental *sagesse* we are entitled to expect from any such inveterate expressivity which really makes for the beauty and the fine significance of this epistolary hoard, though I am very happy to quote such apothegmatic gems as this:

> Existence is mainly a business in which we are constantly throwing overboard the possible to keep the actual afloat, and it is only today that the possible really rides the waves. . . .

Or its corollary: "It takes one whole life to learn how to live at all, which is absurd if there is not to be another in which to apply the lesson." None of these is the real right thing. As I see it, the wonderful, encircling power of this final volume of letters abides in the faith kept, the union celebrated with the earliest perceptions of the self's mission already quoted, a faith and a union which are now so lovingly recast to Morton Fullerton, Edith Wharton's lover, by the 70-year-old novelist:

> The port from which I set out was, I think, that of the *essential loneliness of my life*—and it seems to be the port also to which my course again finally directs itself. This loneliness—what is it still but the deepest thing about one? Deeper about *me*, at any rate, than anything else: deeper than my "genius," deeper than my "discipline," deeper than my pride, deeper above all than the deep countermining of art.

I believe that paragraph to be the densest self-acknowledgement I have ever encountered in the English language, and the use of quotation-marks around "genius" and "discipline" suggest that James was entirely aware of the legend being woven around his mastery. The remarkable word "countermining" suggests where the hopes of profundity were in fact to be found.

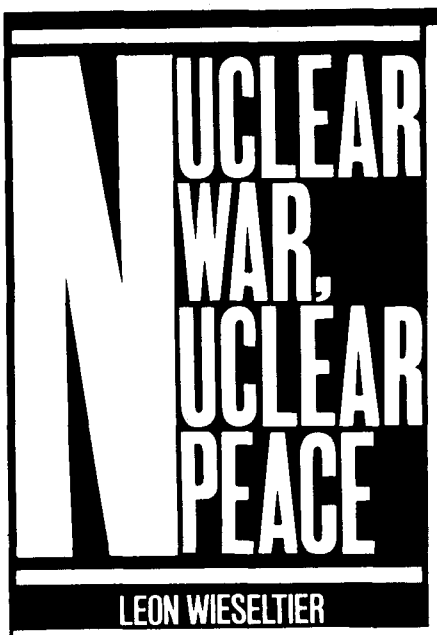
Meanwhile, the gingerly, the rueful (what other spices are to be invoked!) homoerotic life to which even Professor Edel, stern Freudian, grants that James was ultimately reconciled, is traced out in this volume, sometimes in odd terms indeed—specifically odd in a letter to Hendrik Anderson, a young American sculptor of heroic figures. Musing about a race of Americans who might resist the shock of such violent and expensive nudes, James writes his "dear boy" in terms surprising to our old expectations of his propriety: "I won't send you any fig-leaves—I need them all myself. . . . Besides your great heaving and straining ladies and gentlemen would split them in twain at the end of an hour." Odd terms—one is startled by "the mere bloated bugaboo, the sense of the past," and by doing things "in a jiffy"; one is stopped in one's tracks to learn that in the James-Wharton circle, the new King was referred to as Edward the Caresser.

PERHAPS MORE valuable than the verbal vestiges of James as high camp are the shifts and dodges he is put to in order to account for his old America, lost when newest found. The letters afford no sense of the experience of dictating those last three novels, but every indication of the struggle to make *The American Scene:*

> I hate American simplicity. I glory in the piling up of complications of every sort. If I could pronounce the name James in any different or more elaborate way, I should be in favor of doing it.

Of course he doesn't say—to his exasperated sister-in-law—that he would do it, but would favor doing it. There is a great deal of high humor in this book—the comic sense that Poirier long ago insisted we single out has never been more manifest, and more enabling. Indeed, in the face of William's death, World War I, and the steady onset of bodily decay in his own old age, one marvels at James's equanimity, his stoic ardors. Even Professor Edel meets his maker, so to speak, in James's withering explanation of why biographies are so diminishing, so reductive, in a letter to Henry Adams brooding upon his own performance in *William Wetmore Story & His Friends*:

> The truth is that any retraced story of bourgeois lives throws a chill upon the scene, the time, the subject, the small mapped-out-facts, and if you find "great men thin," it isn't really so much their fault (and least of all yours) as that the art



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Front-page, *The New York Times Book Review*

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of the biographer—devilish art!—is somehow practically thinning, it simplifies even while seeking to enrich, and even the immortal are so helpless and passive in death.

The kind of wisdom James exemplifies, having won through to it by precisely those acts of attention, kindness, and criticism, requires a complete record, I believe, not a selection of letters. (Imagine eight volumes instead of four: weed 'em and weep!) It is not to be summarized, not to be epitomized in a ready formula, even one of his own making. Yet it is possible to exit from this incessant metropolitan murmur on the note of a stirring revelation, made, again to Fullerton, in 1907:

> Throw yourself on the blest *alternative* life—which is what I mean by the life of art, and which religiously invoked and handsomely understood *never* fails the sincere invoker—sees him through everything on the contrary and reveals to him the secrets of and for her doing so. She has seen *me* through everything, and that was a large order too.

With Keats's letters, then, these of James stand—even in their sifted quantity—as one of the brightest triumphs of the illuminated consciousness. Thanks are due to Leon Edel for a lifetime's dedication and acuteness in their presentation. His reward, of course, is that he alone has read the complete letters of Henry James, that countermining masterpiece.

RICHARD HOWARD

Richard Howard, whose most recent volume of poems, *Lining Up*, was just published by Atheneum, is working on a study of André Gide.

IN STRUGGLE

Civil Wars
by Rosellen Brown

(Knopf, 419 pp., $16.95)

Now that the 1960s generation has come of middle age, a little nostalgia for the old activist days seems to help take the edge off the big chill of life in the 1980s. In the therapeutic thaw, however, memories have a way of turning muddy. The essence of the era, to judge from versions of it offered by recent movies and fiction (and politicians), was a warm communal spirit—just what's missing these days. The actual political causes that brought together all the hopeful, youthful bodies generally get skimpier treatment; so do the private pursuits that have since split up the members of that generation, who are older and more encumbered now.

Rosellen Brown's large novel about two veterans of the Civil Rights Movement is a remarkable exception to such selective recollections of the 1960s. Not that there isn't muddiness in this ambitious novel, an epic of sorts. There is, literally: *Civil Wars* ends with a flood. And there is figurative murkiness as well, but it comes from delving into the ambivalent truths of the past and present, not from skimming too quickly over the styles of the times. In *Civil Wars*, as in her striking first novel, *The Autobiography of My Mother* (1976) and her acclaimed *Tender Mercies* (1978, no relation to the movie of the same name), Brown aims to confront her characters with unwieldy circumstances and see how resilient they turn out to be. Her own style is vigorous and graceful as she unfolds her episodic plot. In scene after carefully lit scene, Brown explores rather than blurs the relations between the past and the present, between private lives and larger forces.

In 1979 Jessie and Teddy Carll, who met and married and made history in the heyday of the Civil Rights Movement, certainly haven't sold out, but they have come to a turning point in their lives. Still living in Mississippi, where they once marched and where Teddy was almost killed, they've brought up their two children, 14-year-old Andy and 11-year-old Lydia, on a heavy diet of social and racial ideals. They've scrupulously avoided any compromise of their principles in scraping

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together a living, a meager one but adequate to their still scruffy style (there's not a blow-drier in sight in the Carll's unkempt house). Jessie teaches in an alternative school and Teddy travels around selling textbooks (not to segregated academies: he made sure his contract guaranteed that). They are the token white family left in a once integrated neighborhood. Now, however, their neighbors seem to be urging them, none too gently, to be gone. Times have changed, and realistic uneasiness and irony outweigh nostalgia in Jessie's perspective, the reigning one in the novel:

> . . . she remembered the press of general affection, the sharp quick hugs of the men and the sweaty bosom-to-bosom embraces of the women. . . . All the free-floating sensuality of her first few years in Mississippi blended: approval, relief, concern, loneliness, terror, fury, and pleasure in hearty company. . . . She could still miss it so sharply a weight inside her would shift, it was keen as a stitch of pain, when she let herself.
>
> But she did not let herself. Not very often. Her children were half-grown, and the days of Earnest White Girls for Integration were over. Even if it weren't that *Time* magazine and its accomplices tended to think in terms of The Year Of and The Decade Of, history, public and private, did move in its own natural waves, peristaltic, Jessie supposed, as real time digested them and reduced them to ash and offal. They were all new cells now, twice new, since all that.

She and Teddy seem to be having trouble, however, riding those waves of public and private history together. Unlike his wife, Teddy is far from ready to declare the old days over. He still harbors a "perpetual willful hopefulness," once the source of his political strength but now, it seems to Jessie, only a sign of personal confusion and weakness. As the novel opens, he's rigidly—ridiculously, in Jessie's unvarnished view—being an Earnest White Boy for Integration. Despite the fact that their black neighbors call before dawn and breathe ominously, put sugar in their gas tank, stab a skewer into Andy's bicycle tire, Teddy staunchly resists moving—merely to a more happily mixed neighborhood. "Just the way we moved in here once to make a point when that was difficult," he pronounces, "we have to stay now when it's difficult again."

"Sometimes in his arrogance he has more anxiety for the world than for himself" reads one of the novel's epigraphs, from Kafka, and the aphorism is clearly meant to apply to Teddy. A hero of the Movement, he conceives all of experience in political terms, as he explained to Jessie the first time they made love. Most women, she mused, "would have been astounded by the change of focus from their bodies to the body politic." Not Jessie, though, having grown up on that kind of analysis, courtesy of her Communist father. "Another man had gotten to her first and ruined her for ideology."

It's the novel's other epigraph, from Keats, that speaks to Jessie's view of the world, a view that seems to divide her from her husband more as the years pass: ". . . Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a soul?" As anxious about inner as about outer worlds, Jessie has always assumed that change would be a slow and convoluted process, more complicated than the mobilizations Teddy once led and still longs for.

In fact, the epigraphs point to the poles around which the several civil wars of the novel revolve. Jessie and Teddy's struggle, an undeclared but serious one, is not the only battle Brown stages between the claims of the public, active realm and those of a more private sphere. In her first novel, *The Autobiog-*

SERENO

—7 December, 1982

Month when my cord to the womb was cut, yet almost hot
this wind, all strung with ducks, with Oldsquaw, Bufflehead
and Whistler. And the ones I'm after—high,

The clever Blacks, who stretch their necks, and circle, and light
out of my range for good. There was a time
this might have prompted anger, and anger self-contempt:

What was I doing here, blue feet and fingers blocks like wood,
the very moisture of my eyes iced over, and icebergs in my blood?
My blood flows easier with age, the rage to question

Faltering. Like useless thoughts, the trash-birds strafe my blind.
My poor dogs whine: why does the gun stay silent?
Because, as I can't tell them—because I simply watch

The nobler ducks catch whiteness off the sun,
which grows these days each day more rare,
and the bay's best blue. Parade of change.

The wind from north is warm, is wafting
forgiveness here. To noble and ignoble.
Here on Frenchman's Cove on a spit of land, and blinded,

In this strangely torpid season I forgive
the bullies and the bullied, everyone and -thing
who wants to live, that wants to live,

The chasers and the chased:
the killer put to death today by pentathol injection,
Charlie Brooks in Texas;

I forgive the injectors;
I forgive the intractable shyness of all secrets,
like the ducks that stay far out of range.

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raphy of My Mother, civil rights lawyer Gerda Stein wins fame crusading for her clients' freedom, only to come home to face a daughter whose will seems paralyzed. In *Civil Wars*, Brown explores the tensions between public and private history on several different scales. She points to the disharmony between the internal and external politics of the Civil Rights Movement, which is recollected and reappraised in the course of the novel. In the background, she sketches in earlier schisms as well, the result of competing familial and social values. The Singers never quite recovered from the day Jessie's father disappeared underground on behalf of the Soviet Union, leaving his wife and daughter to build a life alone in Brooklyn. A similar rift, with a southern twist, happened to the Carlls: Teddy's name was forever tainted in his racist family the day he joined the Movement.

These marital, familial, and political wars—all cool or cold as the novel opens—heat up in the face of disaster, a familiar device in Brown's fiction. As in *Tender Mercies*, it's a terrible accident that sets the plot in motion. One day word arrives that Teddy's estranged sister and her vigorously racist husband have died in a car accident, leaving the Carlls legal guardians of their children, 8-year-old O'Neill and 13-year-old Helen, brought up to be perfect "little bigots." At stake in the crisis of this divided house are ideological principles and day-to-day practices.

To set out the novel's thematic structure is not, however, to suggest that *Civil Wars* is schematic. On the contrary, it's of the loose and baggy monster school, and some of its many episodes are flat and almost sentimental. But most of them are the product of the best kind of intellectual and emotional patience, for Brown's inclination is Keatsian, and she filters her narrative through Jessie's equally ambivalent vision. "If your sympathies exist two at a time . . . they call you soft, and they always will," Jessie muses, defensive about her half-doubts and uncertainties. Thanks to her ease with ambiguity, there is unusual tension and texture in the novel's political and familial dilemmas. It's only the Carlls's marital troubles that fail to get such rounded treatment.

AS JESSIE reflects on the political past, she finds that her and Teddy's years on the march look more complicated rather than less. In retrospect, she dwells on the divisiveness, not the harmony, of the internal politics of the movement—her awkward, eclipsed status as Teddy's woman; the animosity between organizers and the fresh-faced students they grudgingly imported to help them in their battles; the jockeying for power between northern leaders with their first-rate strategies and southern leaders, like Teddy, with their firsthand knowledge of the evils of segregation.

Jessie also thinks back on some of the public rhetoric, which bothered her in passing then but looms larger now. The memory of one disorienting day is especially sharp. On a walk in the Mississippi countryside, she came upon an old black woman who was the proud possessor of two deformed goats, a dilapidated shack, and a notion of her own predicament that confounded all the analyses Jessie had been zealously taught. The crone had no complaints with her life, and in fact resented the change that had lured her sons away; it was learning to read, she confided to Jessie, that had been the beginning of their no-good restlessness. Later the same day, Jessie was confounded again, this closer to home—by Teddy's notion of his mis-

I forgive all beings in their desperation:
murdered, murderer; mothers, fathers wanting something
the children they bring forth can't give;

Myself for my own childhood cruelties—
the way I taunted Nick Sereno
(*serene*, a thing that neighbor never was,

Dark hungry victim, bird-boned butt of my deceptions . . .
the time I decoyed him out onto the raft
and cut him loose, and jumped.

I cut the frail hemp tether, and off he drifted, quacking fear).
And I forgive the fact that cruelty can circle:
grown, he paid me back one night in a steaming gin mill.

O, this balm of sun!
As if a lifetime's bruises might be balmed.
O, that summer would at last outlast the things to come!

Out on the flooding shellfish beds the Scoters pinwheel,
as if in fun and not in search of food.
I can even forgive the fighter pilots flying

Low as Harriers across the headland.
They flush the drifting Blacks in fear toward me.
In the hot breeze, I can count their single feathers,

Black and blue as birth,
with a seeming whiteness underneath.
Again my sweet-souled dogs look up, perplexed.

They champ their still undulled white puppy teeth.
There is more to all of this than I allow.
Here, in this paradox of weather—

Here for now I let things go,
the mind as light as light upon the wind,
as if here changed and changed into an answer.

SYDNEY LEA

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sion. Overruling her plan, Teddy firmly instructed that helping local rednecks clean up after a cyclone did not figure on his agenda; for all his merciful talk about his benighted but "beloved community" of southern segregationists, Teddy in fact had bitterly damned their souls. The lesson of this disillusioning day, although never spelled out, seems to be the one the novel as a whole teaches by the accretion of social and psychological detail: that the categories of victim, victimizer, and savior are misleading ones, as reductive almost as master and slave, denying the independence of all. It's not the sort of lesson that translates into political positions or leads to saintly action, but the kind that keeps ideological delusion at bay.

JESSIE CONFRONTS familial, as well as political, facts with few formulaic conceptions. At one bitter moment she offers the dark view that "the family exists to perpetuate reduction, intimidation"; she knows the guilt and vengefulness lurking in Teddy's past (and in her own), and she sees how Helen and O'Neill's prejudices have been shaped. Yet that victim theory doesn't seem to have skewed her perspective; she views the children in her life with unpossessive clarity. It's the girls, not the clear-eyed boys, who are hardest to read. Helen, in fact, is a morose mystery, her adolescent soul bared in diary entries that punctuate the narrative. But even with her troubled surrogate daughter and with her own intense Lydia, Jessie is able to step far back and visualize the invisible:

> both, she suspected, were so afflicted with a conviction of their worth and of their worthlessness, simultaneously, or in relation to these judges but not those, to that standard but not this, that they bore themselves—their slight bodies—like precious liquids in a shallow bowl.

Such moral sympathy, however, seems to escape Jessie when it comes to her husband. After the opening chapters, in which Jessie's ambivalence toward Teddy is well modulated between impatience at his posturing and insight into his predicament, she loses the depth of vision that guides her so well on political and familial terrain. "[W]hat if one ideal accidentally marries one real person?" she wonders.

> One round and one flat. . . . It had begun to occur to her early on, and she suppressed it, that when she looked at Teddy in a group or even alone, at rest, what she was seeing was really a painting, or a photograph of a generic Early Movement Hero, the shadows his nose and eyelashes cast altogether hypothetical.

Too often, Brown offers no corrective to Jessie's uncharacteristically reductive view of her husband. Poor Teddy carries on as a caricature, ever flatter as the novel progresses and he turns away from the family to politics, first dabbling in action (he aims to stir up an implausible boycott in a nearby black town), then in theory (he plans a book setting out an even less plausible reassessment of the Movement).

Jessie too loses her shadows in his presence.

> She sounded like a television commercial, she knew, the contemptuous kind she most despised in which husbands and wives betrayed the audience's hostilities—or the copywriter's perception of them—by assaulting each other's dignity and laughing about it.

Jessie's analysis is striking, as always, but she's right, the bickering between them belongs to a less fully imagined medium. It's Teddy who articulates their conflict, accurately but crudely, as he's about to take the kids off to boycott with him. "I'm teaching them there are larger groups than the family that you can swear loyalty to. . . . I am teaching them that women tend to take a narrow view of anything that threatens their beloved family." Beneath the civil wars between the races and generations seems to lurk the longest lasting battle of them all, between the sexes.

That struggle, somewhat surprisingly, is the only one Brown fails to bring into her fine-grained focus, to consider with the "concentration" she celebrates in her fiction. By that word, which she uses often, she seems to mean the energetic fusing and focusing of emotion and thought that others have called imagination or sympathy—a crucial moral linking that lets the locked-in self escape and see others from their own center out. Her protagonists have it or aspire to it, and their lives are complicated in the best sense. Brown has it too, and her concentration is the generous, rigorous power of a well-schooled intelligence—a soul, Keats would call it. Her fiction opens onto worlds of pains and troubles and truths that aren't simple.

ANN HULBERT

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CRICKET AND CULTURE

Beyond a Boundary
by C. L. R. James

(Pantheon, 256 pp., $16.95, $8.95 paper)

Some twenty years ago, C. L. R. James, the Trinidadian expatriate historian and nationalist, wrote *Beyond a Boundary*, since acknowledged to be perhaps the finest book ever written on the game of cricket (and now reissued in both hardcover and paperback). You're struck first by the incongruity: James, the quondam Trotskyite who was expelled from the United States in 1952 for his leftist activities, writing about the game whose etiquette set the metaphorical code ("Keep a straight bat") for the British Empire. It's black nationalism in white flannels. What James's book seeks to demonstrate is that such incongruities exist only on the surface, within the boundaries of conventional categories.

Beyond a Boundary is structured something like a modernist novel. It is eclectic, fragmentary—part boyhood reminiscence, part journalistic extracts, part history, part polemic. The book is best as memoir—James writes of his boyhood with an easy eloquence that recalls *Huckleberry Finn* or Willie Morris's *North Toward Home* (instead of cricket, Morris played football). He grew up with the wicket of the Tunapuna Cricket Club in his backyard, and he has stayed close to the game ever since, either as a participant or a reporter. The wicket was his poolroom, and cricket the pernicious influence that kept him from attaining the conventional success—"Honourable Member of the Legislative Council"—for which his parents had hoped. His heroes were the DiMaggios of West Indian cricket, men like George John, Wilton St. Hill, and James's friend, Learie Constantine. When he went to the library, he was as likely to read old cricket magazines as he was to parse his Virgil.

In this way, cricket was actually a subversive influence in James's life, a way for him to rebel. And James emphasizes throughout how cricket and politics bled into each other in Trinidad. "Cricket had plunged me into politics long before I was aware of it," James writes. "When I did turn to politics I did not have too much to learn." Politics, in Trinidad, meant race. James tells how black cricketers were passed over for selection to the West Indies touring team in favor of less talented white players, how it was impossible for a black player—even Constantine—to be selected captain. James's own trial came when he had to decide which club he would play for, a difficult choice since the clubs were divided according to class, family, and skin hue. James ended up selecting the Maple Club—the team of the brown-skinned middle class—over Shannon, the club of the darker, working-class blacks.

Yet it is for Shannon, the club he passed up, that James evinces genuine enthusiasm. He writes lovingly about their intense, volatile athleticism. If *Beyond a Boundary* is structured like a modernist novel, these detailed anecdotes read like modernist prose; it is James's great triumph that, to the American reader unfamiliar with the game, such passages are both engrossing and utterly incomprehensible:

> Cyl drove John through the covers to the boundary, a low humming hit. It was breast-high, but if you can hit hard enough there is a lot of room between gully and cover. He drove high and he drove low. He drove John straight back. When John shortened he cut him over the slips, but so hard the third man didn't bother to move. He hit him for a towering six to long-on, not too wide either.

From recollections, James turns to a social history of cricket—how Thomas Arnold inculcated the "cricket virtues" into the scions of the ruling class at the Rugby school, and how cricketer W. G. Grace, the exemplar of those virtures and a sort of Babe Ruth of cricket, came to be, in James's mind, the most important cultural figure of Victorian England. "No statue of him exists," James writes. "Yet he continues warm in the hearts of those who never knew him. There he is safe until the whole crumbling edifice of obeisance before Mammon, contempt for Demos and categorizing intellectualism finally falls apart."

James's bias for this kind of history is based on a utilitarian notion: since more people care more deeply about sports than politics, our history books should be full of cricket, soccer, and baseball. This argument comes as a stalking horse to the main thrust of his polemic, which is that cricket is not merely socially significant popular culture, but an art form in its own right, "Not a bastard or a poor relation, but a full member of the community." In this light, going "beyond a boundary," literally a sort of cricket home run, means going beyond the artificial barriers we create between high and low culture, art and sport, social history and politics.

This echoes the now-familiar neo-Marxist critique of "liberal culture," and there's something to what James says. There's no quicker way to mummify a work of art than when it is cabined as a "masterpiece"; such low culture elements as the circus and television, for example, have brought vitality to the contemporary avant-garde theater. As Roger Angell has demonstrated, there's more of Aeschylus in a Carl Yastrzemski pop-up than there is in much of our theater, and professional wrestling, generally sneered at by intellectuals, may be the only authentic Artaudian theater of cruelty in the West.

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It's hard, though, to know how far to go with this idea. All experience is not equivalent. There's a dividing line somewhere—at his most tragic, Yaz was never Lear—but it may not be worth the effort to find it. James doesn't seem to realize that all his turgid theorizing about the relation of cricket to drama and painting doesn't add one iota to his reminiscences earlier in the book which, by revealing James's depth of feeling for the game, were themselves his best argument for considering it the equivalent of drama. By insisting that cricket be included among The Arts, he evinces that thralldom to liberal culture which he sought to criticize. "I've never understood that—about art forms," Diana Vreeland once remarked. "People say a little Schiaparelli design is an *art form*. Why can't it just be a very good dress?"

PAUL ATTANASIO

Paul Attanasio is a writer and critic living in Cambridge.

TRB, *from page 6*

harbors. The reason is that the mining clarifies the nature of the exercise. This isn't covert aid. This is war. Americans are running this show. The C.I.A. designed the mining operation, supplied the mines, and supervised their installation. And mining a harbor is economic warfare. The target is not the army or even the government, but the Nicaraguan people themselves. Incidental victims include neutral ships. The evident goal is not merely to stop the Sandinistas from harassing their neighbors, but to bring that government down. If this constitutes "collective self-defense" under international law, then the concept has been bent to the breaking point.

Does it matter? What do we lose by abandoning the idea that international law should constrain our behavior as a superpower? Will we lose the fight for freedom if we don't abandon it?

International law is not an impossible ideal, even in a world where others don't obey it. Specifically, it does not require the United States to stand by helpless while Communist countries subvert their neighbors. But international law requires certain public procedural steps. And it requires that military actions be clearly related and proportionate to legal ends.

These formalistic restraints may seem petty, but Nicaragua is a good example of why they're not. It is obvious to the Reagan Administration and its supporters that our goals in Central America are admirable. This is not obvious to many Central Americans—and not just Sandinistas—who remember our forty years of support for the Somoza tyranny. A whole subspecialty of political science is now devoted to the question of the proper level of cordiality with unattractive foreign governments, but no special expertise is needed to wonder whether the successive regimes in Nicaragua warrant the extremes of total embrace followed by total hostility. One function of an unenforceable set of rules like international law is to clarify an inherently muddled situation like this one, and to neutralize distrust, by obviating the question of motive. It matters less what we're up to as long as we're obeying the law.

In our invasion of Grenada, the legal situation was dubious but the moral situation was unusually clear. If every foreign policy decision involved a relatively certain cost, a clear and immediate result, and a sharp moral calculus, we could play Superpower like a video game. Most foreign policy decisions are messy, with results that are factually unpredictable and often morally indeterminate. That is why it's useful to us to be known for upholding neutral rules of international behavior.

What's more, we believe in these rules, don't we? What do we mean when we accuse others of "state-sponsored terrorism"? Do we actually object only to their goals, not to their methods? In the cause of democracy and freedom, will we break any rule our enemies break?

In fact, we won't. Unlike the Soviets, we suffer from "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind." The closer the world is to a Hobbesian state of nature, the more of a disadvantage this becomes. International law is a shaky edifice in need of constant shoring up. The United States will always bear a disproportionate share of that burden. But we get a disproportionate share of the benefit, too.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Writing in a State of Siege: Essays on Politics and Literature by André Brink (Summit). The difficult life of art under the rule of apartheid. (Reviewed 4/30/84)

Peter Hall's Diaries: The Story of a Dramatic Battle by Peter Hall (Harper & Row). Hell and heaven at Britain's National Theatre. (4/30/84)

Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood by Kristin Luker (University of California Press). A sophisticated sociological analysis of the fierce debate. (4/30/84)

Edisto by Padgett Powell (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). A first novel about coming of age in South Carolina. (4/30/84)

The Black Book of Polish Censorship translated and edited by Jane Leftwich Curry (Random House). An invaluable inside view of the workings of Communist censorship. (4/2/84)

Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary 1945-1951 by Alan Bullock (Norton). The final years of a great English statesman. (4/9/84)

Testing the Current by William McPherson (Simon & Schuster). A midwestern world through the eyes of a watchful little boy. (4/30/84)

D. W. Griffith: An American Life by Richard Schickel (Simon & Schuster). A comprehensive and conscientious biography—the best ever written—of the director who helped shape film as we now know it. (4/23/84)

Congress and the Common Good by Arthur Maass (Basic). A book that makes sense of the most complicated legislature in the world. (4/2/84)

Days We Would Rather Know by Michael Blumenthal (Viking). The many moods of a notable new poet. (4/16/84)

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

On the Record

YEARS AGO, when THE NEW REPUBLIC was headquartered in New York, it had its offices in an elegant Gramercy Park mansion. Its deficits in those days were met by a Morgan partner who also provided the editors with sumptuous daily lunches at a sumptuously laid table in the mansion's sumptuously paneled dining room. We've got a picture of that setting hanging in our conference room—vivid evidence of downward mobility. Edmund Wilson confided to his diaries just how deadly those lunches were, what with the conversational specialty of the house being high-minded discourse from the likes of Walter Lippmann—brilliant fellow, certainly, but not someone you'd want to break bread with every day. We still have regular lunches in our offices, and for all I know some staffer with an eye on posterity is recording his tedium just as Wilson did. But there are differences both with our own past and with the standard Washington insiders' lunch menu. No in-house chef prepares our repast, which is delivered from an eatery called C. F. Folks, right across the way on Nineteenth Street: pastrami, corned beef, and turkey sandwiches plus a big bowl of fresh fruit for the health faddists and chronic dieters, who usually also eat the batch of brownies there as dessert. To these lunches comes a stream of figures from the policy and opinion elites: Presidential candidates, labor bosses, men and women across the spectrum and from across troubled borders. And, more rarely, someone like Yo Yo Ma.

IN CONTRAST TO the standard TNR lunch guest, Yo Yo Ma didn't speak off the record, for the only secret he has which we'd want to know is the secret of his remarkable talent—and that secret is not transferable. At 28, Yo Yo may already be the greatest cellist of the era. His new recording of all of Bach's unaccompanied cello suites—the making of which some termed impertinent—has evoked comparisons to Casals. And like Casals, he has done something for the cello besides play it beautifully. Even great cellists don't ordinarily create audiences the way great pianists and conductors and sopranos do, but Yo Yo has. He's been doing so ever since he was an undergraduate at Harvard, where I first met and heard him. Yo Yo talks like he plays, which is no offense to his playing but is only to say that the music is in his soul and not only in his fingers. Soulful people can be witty and also to the point. He is both. He told us that a larger audience for the cello required a larger cello repertoire, and that he was "stealing" some pieces from the violin. We talked about ethnicity and music—about Jews, of course, and about Orientals. "Jews in Russia played the violin," he said, "because it was a valuable possession easy to carry across borders." He didn't have as facile an explanation for why upwards of 30 percent of the students at Juilliard are Chinese- or Japanese-Americans. Do different cultures have distinctive talents and distinctive affinities? I won't try to paraphrase complicated responses. But he did speculate that "the great musicians of the next generation, or of the generation after that, are likely to be other than Jews and Chinese." Maybe so. But if Yo Yo Ma comes your way to play Dvořák's cello concerto, or Elgar's, or Beethoven's sonatas for cello and piano, you'll not hear any of these played more faultlessly or more passionately. And that's on the record, from people much more discriminating than myself.

THE AMERICAN Repertory Theatre, whose director is TNR's drama critic Robert Brustein, is known for its aesthetic daring. Two one-act plays by Allan Havis, brought together under the title *Holy Wars*, are now featured on the Rep's experimental stage in Cambridge, and they are powerfully conceived. *Morocco* is a taut conversation between a symbolic American and an even more symbolic, but not superficial, Third World policeman; the surprise in the play is that it is not the American but the Moroccan who comes off as the cruel clod. The reversal of the usual roles is even greater in *The Road from Jerusalem*, in which a visiting German businessman, an American Jewess come as an immigrant, and an Arab Palestinian find themselves taking refuge in a bomb shelter in Jerusalem under Arab siege. If there is something a bit startling about the emerging empathy between the play's German and its Jew, even less have the universalist prejudices of our culture prepared us for its Arab—a crazed Arab to be sure, but crazed in the distinctive ways of his culture. He is intoxicated by language, cannot discern between fantasy and reality, abhors compromise, always blames others for his predicament, and in the end lances the painful boil of his frustrations in a pointless, though momentarily gratifying, act of bloodlust. This is a political play, and what makes it compelling is its pessimism, which is to say its truthfulness. We have seen this play's Arab in Tripoli and in Damascus, and in recent weeks hijacking a bus to Gaza and shooting up a street of innocents in Jerusalem. On the Rep stage he is a fictional character, of course, but in the real world it is not he but his "moderate" brother who is a figment of the imagination.

I AM IN RECEIPT of a brochure from a group called Peace Activists for Jackson, among whom is counted the silliest Nobel Laureate of them all, George Wald. The Peace Activists are remarkably candid about what Jesse Jackson means to them. He reminds them of W. E. B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson, who played an "inspiring role" in the U.S. peace movement. That's one way of putting it. Another way is to tell the truth, that Du Bois and Robeson were Communist Party members and enthusiastic apologists for the cruelties they knew Stalinism was inflicting on the peoples of both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. There are elements in today's peace movement which also think peace activism means support for the aims of the U.S.S.R., and these elements have turned to the Jackson campaign as a congenial effort. Jackson has said nothing to dissuade them. In fact, virtually every time he opens his mouth on foreign affairs, he bolsters the confidence of tyrants and terrorists around the world that they have plenty of friends in America. It was the same false promise that Du Bois and Robeson also made on behalf of black people to Stalin. The big difference between Jackson on the one hand and Du Bois and Robeson on the other lies elsewhere. As politically craven and naïve though they might have been, Du Bois and Robeson were also, each in his own way, great men.

M.P.

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